

MAYA RESISTANCE TO SPANISH RULE

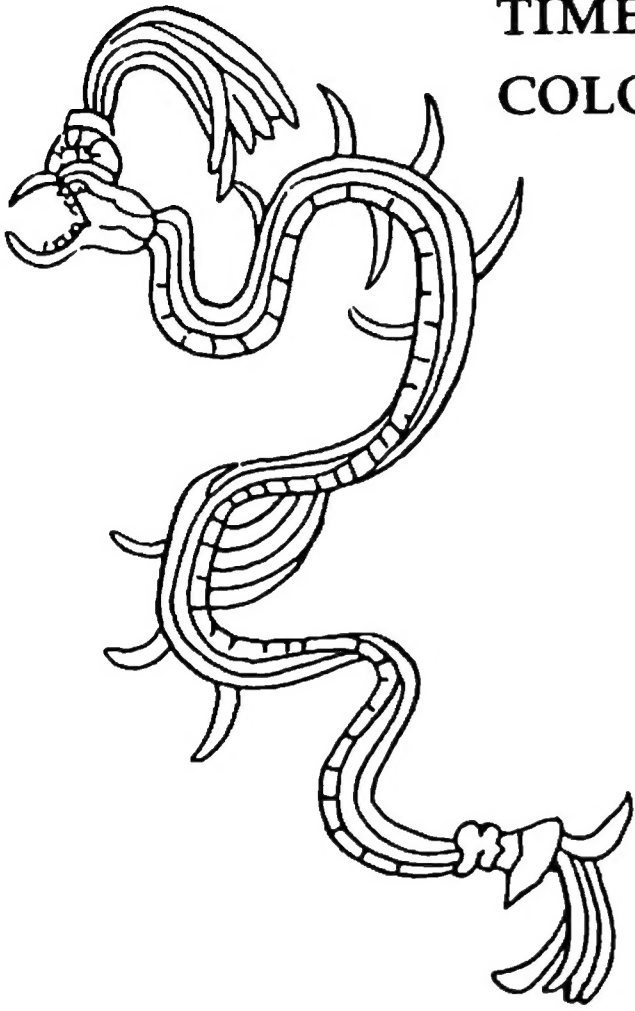
TIME AND HISTORY ON A
COLONIAL FRONTIER



GRANT D. JONES

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PREFACE

Any study of indigenous resistance to Spanish colonial rule in the New World creates special difficulties for the ethnohistorian. Much anticolonial behavior by the native population undoubtedly went unreported due to the embarrassing light that such revelations would cast on local officials and ordinary citizens. On the other hand, some behavior labeled at the time as insurrectionary was exaggerated in official reports in order to justify strong punitive measures. Such controversial events of the distant past are not easily unraveled by the contemporary investigator.

This book attempts to avoid some of these pitfalls in documenting and interpreting the historical process of Maya resistance on the southeastern frontiers of colonial Yucatan. By stretching the period of study over a century and a half, some of the difficulties inherent in examining a single event melt away as long-term processes and patterns begin to emerge. In addition, by focusing particular attention upon the Mayas as independent actors with their own historical agenda, I have sought to mitigate some of the distortions that undoubtedly characterize the colonial sources.

The other side of resistance was, of course, the pursuit of colonial policies to which the native population responded. In this book I have attempted to balance native thought and practice against Spanish action, providing a wider colonial perspective by means of which behavior on both sides can be reconstructed and interpreted. While I maintain that the native population possessed a theory of history that informed many of their actions, I recognize that they applied their theory of time and history primarily in response to practices of economic exploitation on the part of the colonial society. Neither the Mayas nor the Spaniards created history in isolation, and in the last analysis their tightly interlocking fates produced the drama of the following pages.

Few areas of Latin America could have been more difficult choices for such a study, so remote was the Yucatecan frontier from the metropolitan centers that generated the documents that survive today. The theme of frontier isolation is central to the study, however, and I have

sought to make the best of our often incomplete knowledge. The frontier quality of life in these parts of Yucatan stimulated native resistance as well as colonial excess, and the choice of such an area for a study of these themes provides distinct advantages. In regions where the tapestry of colonial life was richer, where the native population was more fully institutionalized into colonial society, the discovery of such continuing patterns of resistance may be more difficult—both because of their relative infrequency and because of the sheer weight and complexity of the documentary record.

Readers may discern certain parallels between the colonial experiences of the frontier Mayas of Yucatan and those of the Mayas of modern Guatemala. During the late 1970s and early 1980s many native communities of highland Guatemala, suspected by the government and armed forces of conspiring with antigovernment guerrilla movements, were forced into hiding and exile in their own country and in Mexico during a period of intense military intimidation. During this period tens of thousands of Guatemalan Indians were tortured, massacred, and "disappeared," and their crops and property destroyed. Some returned voluntarily to their communities, but others were forced to return under military escort to "model" towns with tighter, restructured settlement patterns under the watchful guard of armed soldiers.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth century, Mayas suspected of anticolonial sentiments were also subjected to investigation under torture, and those who were convicted were often summarily executed. Those who ran to the forests, avoiding the forced requirements of tribute and service, were rounded up by military parties and resettled in planned communities under military guard. Entire towns on the frontier that were known to harbor millenarian leaders who recruited these runaways were occasionally destroyed and resettled in such "reduction" towns.

The practices of military search-and-destroy missions, of investigation under duress, of forced resettlement, and even of the utilization of native militias have deep historical roots in this part of the world. In addition, in both modern and past times an important motivating factor for such military "reconquest" appears to have been the desire to reverse the trend of increasing economic independence on the part of the native population—a concern that always may have been greater than the fear of actual insurrection. Also deeply rooted, however, has been the colonial/ladino distrust of Indians who speak languages that cannot be fully understood and who practice customs that may mask their true intentions. All of these factors affected Spanish-Indian relations throughout the colonial period and remain significant today.

The parallels between past and present, however, are not complete. After the initial years of the conquest, military reconquest in Yucatan seldom resulted in large-scale loss of life among the Indians. Nor were native towns in areas under government control routinely subjected to such violent practices by armed troops. In contrast to modern times, native colonial populations were small, and to massacre even the most recalcitrant among them would have been to destroy the colony's only source of significant wealth. And whereas the established church has lost much of its influence in modern Guatemala, the colonial church played a significant moderating role, monitoring resettled populations by means of head-counting and imposing at least a nominal moral code upon the behavior of the military.

Eventually it may be possible to reconstruct the role of native theories of history in the recent tragic events of modern Guatemala. Ironically, however, this task may prove to be far more difficult than it is for the colonial past. Thousands of Guatemalan Maya leaders have been killed, and few who remain alive will feel free to speak openly for many years. This book can only partially illuminate the present struggles of native peoples, as the actors, conditions, and issues of modern times are so different from those of the past. My wish is only to demonstrate that the past and the present flow together in a common struggle by a native majority to define and defend the terms of their independence from external control. They, not the academic writers, will always be the authors of their own history.

Santa Fe
October 1988

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I first became aware of Tipu and the importance of the Spanish presence in colonial Belize from the late J. Eric S. Thompson, with whom I had a rich and rewarding correspondence during 1976. Sir Eric had already given me valuable advice before I set off in 1965 for my first ethnographic field research among the Maya—in the Mopan village of San Antonio, in the Toledo District of southern Belize. I followed his actual footsteps in San Antonio, where he had worked many years earlier, and in Tipu, which he had visited only in spirit. In both cases I learned much from him and can only hope that he would have approved of my efforts to complete his own pioneering ethnohistorical studies of the Maya of Belize.

I was taught much about the meaning and significance of history by the Mayas themselves. My dissertation fieldwork (1967–1968) in the Corozal District of northern Belize introduced me to the significance of the Caste War of Yucatan for the daily lives of the Mayas of that area, particularly in the village of Xaibe. That experience led me to explore the relationships between past and present through archival research in Belize in 1968 and 1972 and through travel and oral historical research in Belize and Quintana Roo in 1978. I am grateful to the many people who helped me in these areas, but I especially wish to thank Jesús Ken, whose contributions as translator, Maya diplomat, intellectual critic, and friend were central to many of my endeavors.

David Earle assisted me during my work at the Archivo General de Indias (1982–1983), discovering many documents that would have remained unread without his patience, knowledge, and sharpness of eye. I thank him especially for his willingness to sort out and interpret the partially burned records from the Contaduría section. Originally my student, David had become a stimulating and critical teacher who helped me to think of new questions and to reexamine many of the old ones. My thanks also go to Dudley Reynolds, who assisted me during the summer of 1986 in translating and making sense of extensive amounts of seventeenth-century Spanish text.

Nancy Farriss first convinced me to dive headlong into the Spanish

colonial period. As I owe her such a large measure of gratitude for changing the direction of my previous research, I hope that she does not regret having provided me with that advice. Her willingness to allow me to use the unpublished manuscript of her *Maya Society under Colonial Rule* as a guide to Yucatecan colonial history and sources saved me many months of research time in the Archivo General de Indias.

David Pendergast has been a valued colleague and friend throughout the life of this project. Our struggles to determine whether or not the archaeological site at Negroman was the old location of Tipu required a feat of labor—repeated extrications of my vehicle from miles of muddy road out of Lamanai in 1979—that only the friars Orbita and Fuensalida could have fully appreciated. Undaunted, David has since then supported my efforts unceasingly, even though I have been unable to provide him with much documentation on the colonial town of Lamanai.

Robert Kautz, then my colleague at Hamilton College, directed the first seasons of archaeological research at Tipu. Although little of that work has found its way into this book, I recognize the importance of the archaeological aspects of this project to my general thoughts on history. Bob gave much to the project, and I thank him for his contributions.

Elizabeth Graham, the most recent director of the archaeological research at Tipu, has patiently examined and expertly interpreted difficult questions pertaining to the later periods at that site, frequently demonstrating parallels and differences with nearby Lamanai. As these ideas have undoubtedly found their way into my thoughts and writing, I wish to thank Liz for the stimulation of our continuing discussions and collaborative efforts.

Anthony P. Andrews and Norman Schwartz each read the draft manuscript of this book and provided me with valuable suggestions for its improvement. Although I may not have taken all of their advice, I incorporated much of it in the final revision. Tony and Norman have shared their ideas unselfishly with me over the years, but neither of them is in the least responsible for whatever weaknesses and errors remain in this book. I wish to thank O. Nigel Bolland, Robert Carmack, Munro Edmonson, Joanne Rappaport, and others who have also provided me with ideas and criticism that have affected the development of this project.

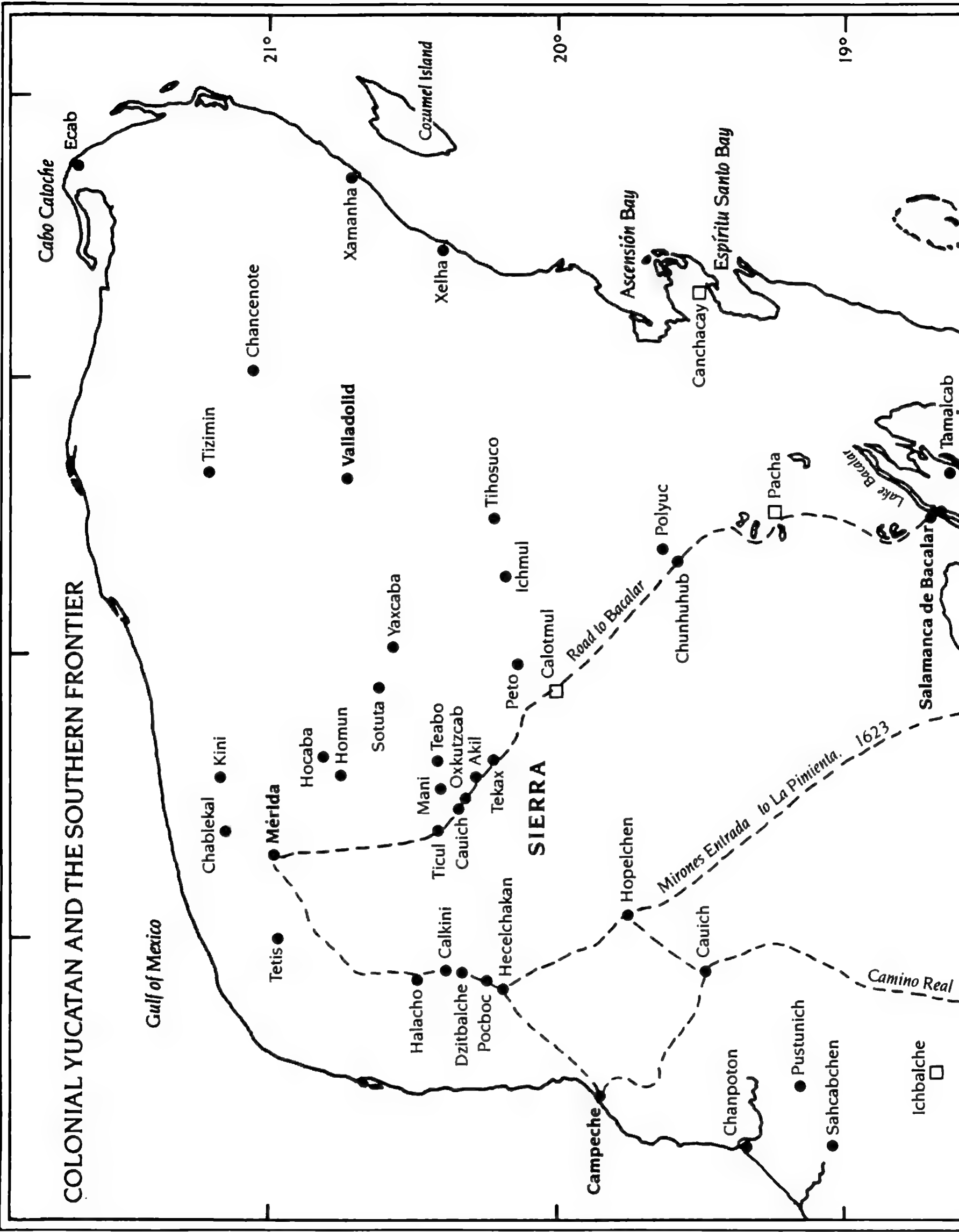
My students at Davidson and Hamilton Colleges have contributed to my ideas through their insistence on clarity of expression and their challenging questions regarding the ultimate significance of the study of past times. I have learned much from them, and I hope that those among them who read this book will see the imprint of their influence.

Hamilton College and Davidson College have provided generous financial support that made much of the research for this project possible. I especially thank former Dean C. Duncan Rice of Hamilton College, former Dean T. Price Zimmermann of Davidson College, and Dean Robert C. Williams of Davidson College for their encouragement and support of my research. My work at the Archivo General de Indias was generously supported by a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies and by a grant from the Royal Ontario Museum. The National Geographic Society's support of several seasons of archaeological research at Tipu is also gratefully acknowledged. In addition, I thank the National Endowment for the Humanities and the staff and administration of the School of American Research for the opportunity to work as a Resident NEH Scholar in the pleasant environment of Santa Fe, where I have completed the writing and final revisions of this book.

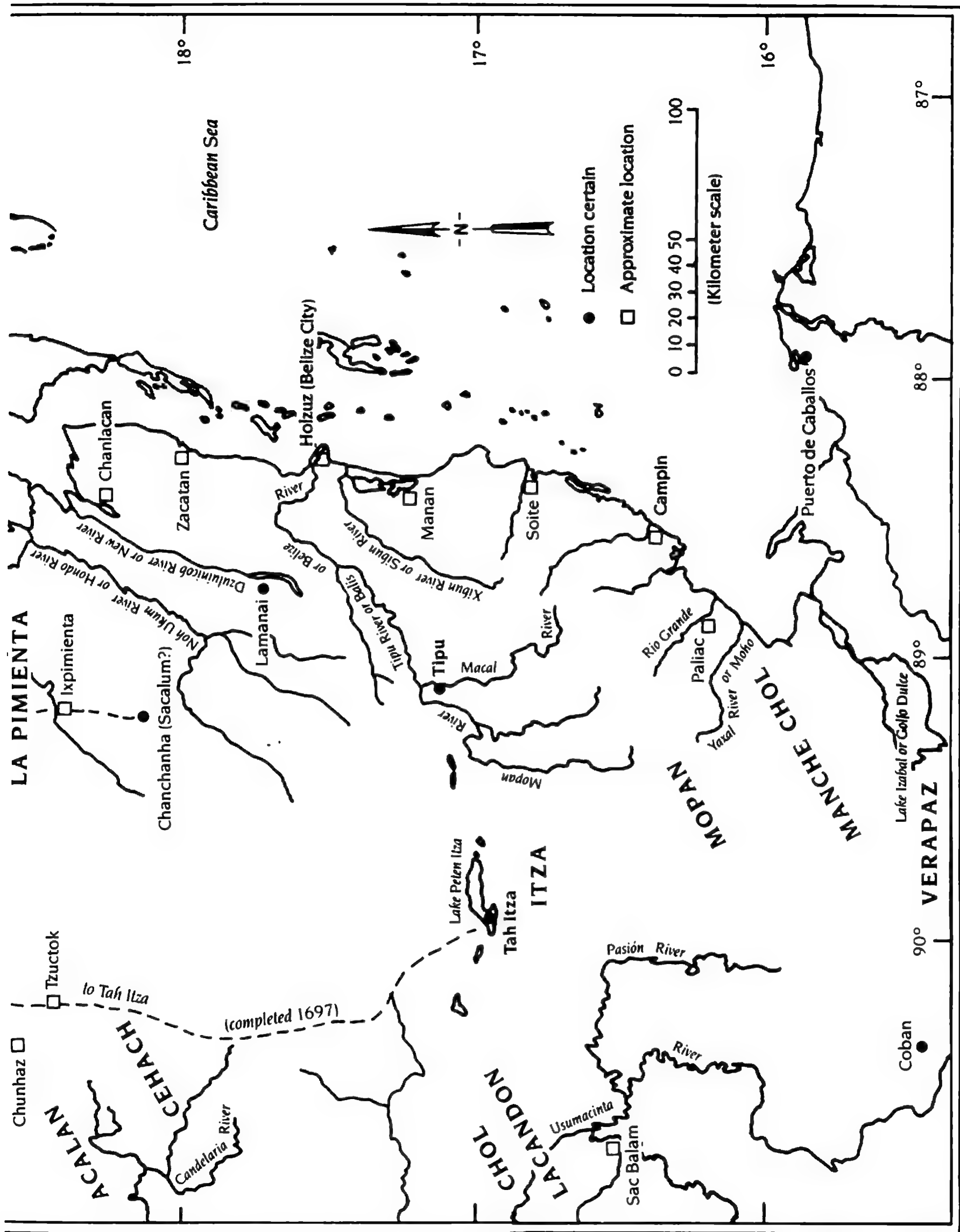
The director and staff of the Archivo General de Indias, where nearly all of the primary documentation for this study is stored, were particularly helpful throughout my ten months of work there. The Archivo General de Simancas provided me with copies of documents, including the important 1726 map of the Bacalar area; and the Newberry Library furnished me a photocopy of the 1696 account of the Itzas by Fray Andrés de Avendaño y Loyola.

I thank Katrina Lasko for preparing the two maps that appear on the following pages. Thomas Hathaway generously provided skilled editorial assistance, for which I am most grateful.

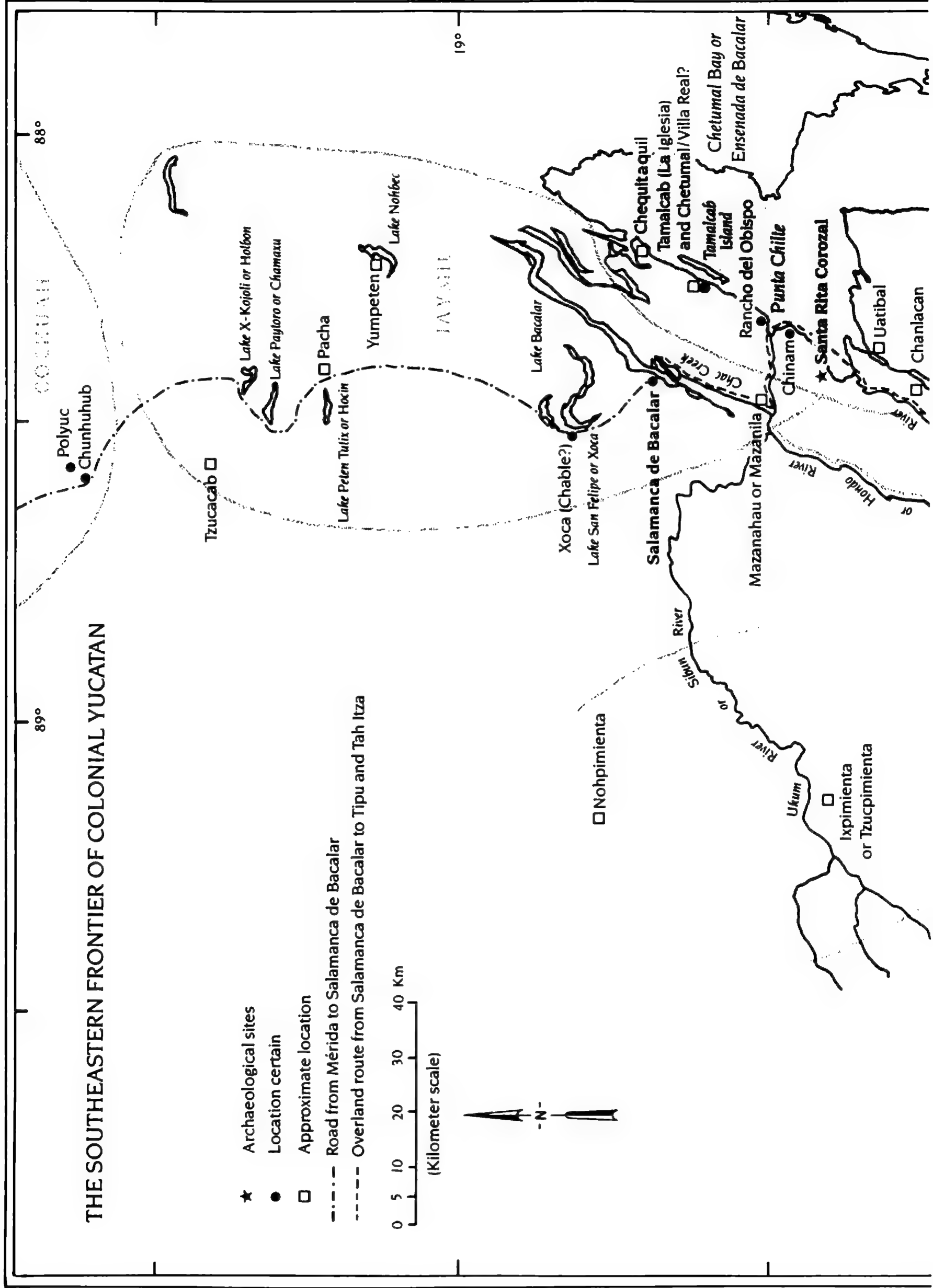
Mary—my wife—and my two sons, Alan and Christopher, have accompanied me on nearly all of my research trips. At home they have had to endure both my mental and physical absences while I have pored over documents and rushed to meet overdue deadlines. Mary has read the entire manuscript more than once, serving as an expert editor and as my most challenging critic. My dedication of this book to my family is in appreciation of their support and affection throughout every stage of the preparation of this book.

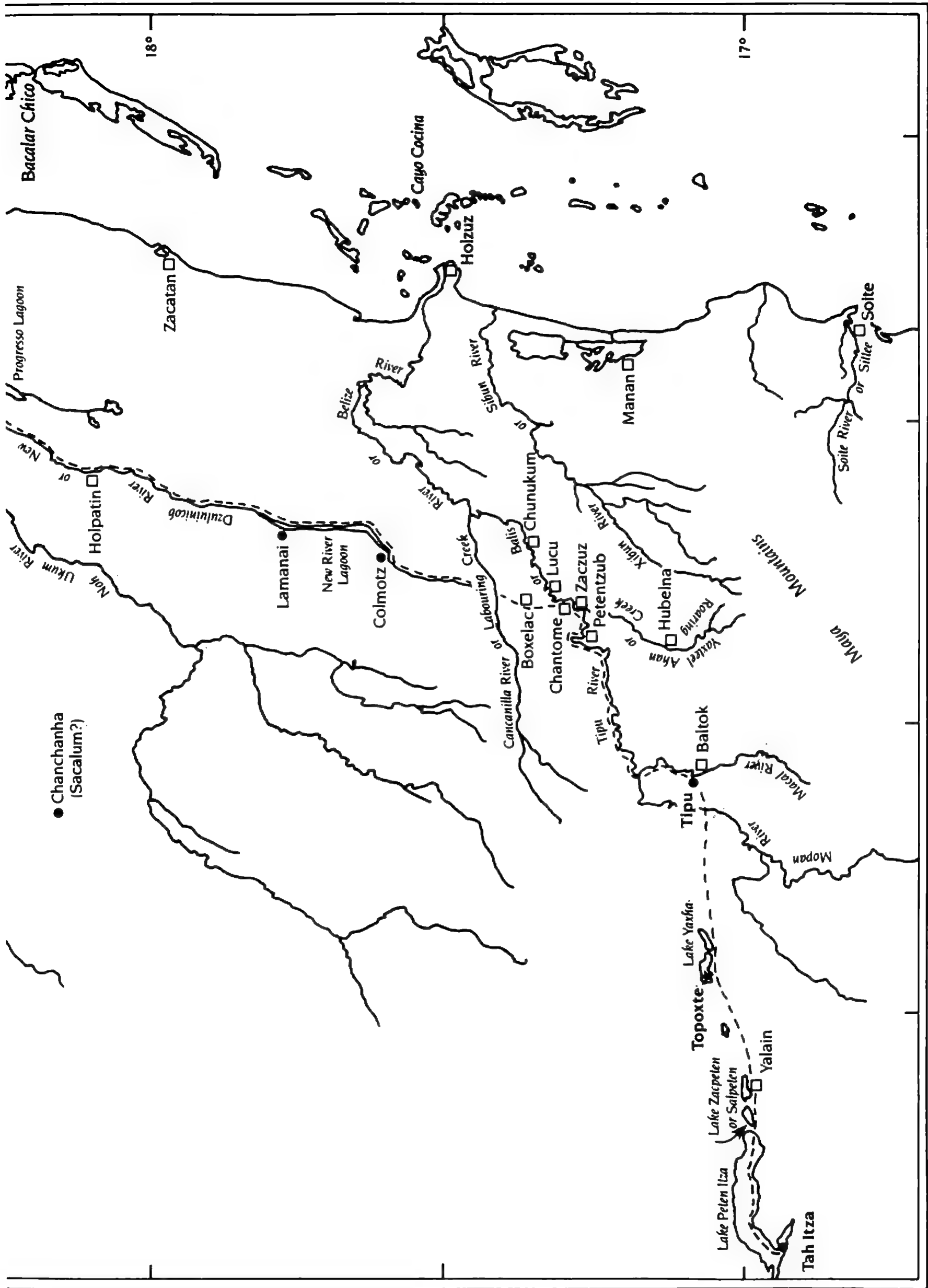


MAP 1



MAP 2





1: REDISCOVERING THE FUGITIVE



The Petén has held its secrets well. Among them are ruins of the sort that have made the ancient Maya famous as a vanished civilization. Crumbling pyramids, vine-shrouded walls, and fallen monuments fill much of this vast and desolate region—all that remains of a network of cities that flourished for many centuries before being abandoned about a thousand years ago.¹

The reaches opened before us and closed behind, as if the forest had stepped leisurely across the water to bar the way for our return. We penetrated deeper and deeper into the heart of darkness.²

TEXTUAL PRECONCEPTIONS

In Western texts the jungle is often a place where the natural order threatens the order of culture. Human artifacts—roads, architecture, sown fields—are soon swallowed by an incessantly greedy vegetation. The dangers of the wild—reptiles, cats, and invisible diseases—are magnified as certain destroyers of human existence. Those people who do manage to inhabit such a place are savages, fugitives from the progressive destiny of evolution.

Western fascination with Maya civilization reflects a preoccupation with this culture as a symbol of the struggle of humanity against overwhelming natural odds. In much of the academic and semipopular literature we are challenged by the seemingly remarkable fact that the ancient Lowland Maya overcame the burdens of natural life in the jungle and rose above the canopy of the rain forest by means of architectural feats characteristic of truly civilized life. We are thus faced with an apparent contradiction between our popular belief that the natural order of the jungle is the enemy of the order of culture and the obvious success of

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the ancient Maya in overcoming the supposed limits placed on cultural expression in this environment. A central appeal of the Maya for us lies in their challenge to our traditional vision of humanity.

Lowland Maya civilization is therefore uncanny and romantic, and our perceptions of its "mysterious" qualities have hindered serious empirical research on subjects that until only recently were in danger of drowning in methodological quicksands. Among these were the intensive agricultural infrastructure of Classic Maya society;³ the political and social significance of hieroglyphic texts;⁴ the multiple factors that must have comprised the phenomenon known as the Classic Maya Collapse;⁵ and the survival of many aspects of Maya civilization up to and even beyond the Spanish conquest. Maya archaeologists have strived to escape the mythological image of the jungle as a place beyond civilized human control. Yet even today, when our vision of the Classic Maya Collapse of the ninth and tenth centuries A.D. has graduated from simplistic monocausal theories to debate over the complexities of a dynamic cybernetic,⁶ there are still symptoms of cultural gloating over the very fact of the Collapse itself. Even the most controlled examples of this research⁷ tend unwittingly to support our prior notion that this civilization in the jungle was doomed to failure. As hard as they might have tried, these lords of the jungle, according to one scenario, finally succumbed to forces in their environment that they could not control; in so doing, in their weakened state they invited final blows to their fragile political economy by foreigners who gained control over their external trade networks.⁸

HERITAGE OF COLLAPSE

The relative merits of the notion of the inevitability of the Classic Maya Collapse aside, the fact of its occurrence has so satisfied our precepts that we have all but ignored its localized aftereffects. What we know today about the Lowland Maya Postclassic period is confined primarily to the northern portions of the Yucatan peninsula that enjoyed a cultural renaissance under way by the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. Inherited scholarly wisdom has informed us that the Southern Lowlands, once the flower of Classic Maya civilization, remained culturally desolated, thinly inhabited, and suitable only for those northern "civilized" Maya who for political reasons had to accept the status of fugitives and flee to the recesses of the Guatemalan Peten to live out their destiny as exiles. That such fugitives probably constructed such impressive centers as Topoxte is not seriously debated, nor is the apparent fact that this site is virtually unique for the Postclassic Peten.⁹ Smaller

Postclassic settlements have been located and studied,¹⁰ but their small number, coupled with the absence of extensive Postclassic research on Lake Peten Itza,¹¹ leaves us with only the slightest physical evidence for the quality of life following the Classic Maya Collapse.

Maya archaeologists not uncommonly observe that although they began their field research in the Southern Maya Lowlands with the intention of studying the elusive Postclassic, they reluctantly succumbed to the temptations of the richer, more spectacular remains of the Classic and earlier periods. Fortunately, this situation is at last changing with a recent spate of interest in Postclassic studies.¹² Postclassic research remains the stepchild of Maya studies, however, despite the fact that this period provides an epoch of transition, and not a historical hiatus, between the relatively remote Classic period on the one hand and the Historic and contemporary ethnographic periods on the other.

Even more recently, archaeologists have begun to examine how the lowland Mayas adapted to the imposition of Spanish colonial controls on the Yucatan peninsula and its southern extensions in Belize and the Peten. In a temporal period long dominated by historians and ethnohistorians, archaeologists are discovering in these regions and elsewhere in the New World a rich record that complements and widens our vision of indigenous experiences of conquest, colonization, accommodation, and resistance.¹³ These efforts to integrate the physical remains of the Maya experience with a radically different body of European written documentation are still in their infancy, and much remains to be learned about appropriate methodologies and the best modes of discourse by which this integration may be achieved. Few archaeologists and ethnohistorians have yet to take up these challenges, and there is little proposed work on the horizon.

It may be argued, in fact, that the paucity of archaeological research on the Postclassic and Historic periods in the Maya lowlands—and, by temporal extension, the lack of interest by students of the Spanish documents in the remote, forested southern and easternmost Maya regions—is itself an artifact of a particular vision of these areas as beyond the pale of civilization. For Maya studies, save for those carried out in distant villages by intrepid ethnographers, have been predominantly studies of *civilization*—of peoples, both indigenous and European, who exhibited the qualities of complex, hierarchical, literate society. Those regions and time periods that have been perceived, rightly or wrongly, to fall outside these criteria have been largely ignored. Remaining beyond the limits of the known and the readily apprehensible, they have simply not challenged our interest and imagination.

FRONTIER OPPOSITIONS

This book seeks to revise our historical consciousness of southern Maya history by demonstrating the vibrancy of Maya life on the remotest of the frontiers of southern Yucatan during the first century and a half following the Spanish conquest. This is, however, a study of history as comprehended primarily through the documentary record. Although archaeological research related to this study is well on its way to enlarging and further transforming our vision, the ethnohistorian's first responsibility is to interpret the regionally broader, more inclusive documentary record as an integrated but immensely complex, sometimes confusing, and frustratingly incomplete source of information. Some of the conclusions of this study will undoubtedly be revised in the years to come as a result of archaeological and further ethnohistorical research, but so different are the archaeological and historical records that each to some extent requires its own reflections before complete integration can be achieved.

Before embarking on this task, the guiding themes of this study must be outlined. Central to these themes is the old concept of the frontier, interpreted anew here in the light of the Maya experience. Until very recently a survey of literature would have indicated the assumption that the Classic Maya Collapse created a series of physical, historical, and mythical dichotomies. These dichotomies, which I refer to here as "frontier oppositions," may be found in a variety of written texts, all of which to a greater or lesser extent continue to influence our thinking on the "post-Collapse" Maya. The entire range of Spanish colonial sources, the nineteenth-century Spanish-language sources on the Caste War of Yucatan, the Maya archaeological literature of the past century and a half, and even the ethnographic literature of the past half century all build a semimythical case for the "two worlds of the Maya": an outward-looking, dryish, northern coastal world on the one hand, and an inward-looking, humid southern jungle world on the other.

The Postclassic northern world, according to this view, was oriented toward foreign expansionaries from beyond the sea, first those of Toltec persuasions and later the Spaniards. It was a place of change and dynamic activity, a region of traders, entrepreneurs, political adventurers, and a sophisticated, urban, multi-ethnic population. The southern world, in contrast, was a place where only fugitives from the rigors of civilization could be found. It was static, hidden from external view and economic contact, unsophisticated, rural, supremely traditional, and culturally backward.¹⁴ It was therefore the just reward of the Peten, the

center of this southern zone, that following the 1697 Spanish "conquest" of the Itza confederacy the region should have been turned into a penal colony—a place to which only the criminal elements of civilization would be sent and from which no one could hope to escape. The jungle was the world's most effective prison.

In this book I shall explore an alternative perspective on this cultural and physical duality.¹⁵ My time framework is limited to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—the first century and a half of Spanish colonial rule—but these centuries may well turn out to be instructive for our understanding of earlier (and perhaps later) periods as well. The physical and cultural framework is limited to a little known, remote Maya region of Spanish America: the southeasternmost areas of the Yucatan peninsula, extending into the Itza-controlled regions of the central Peten of northern Guatemala. Central to our understanding of these territories during the Spanish period were three regional foci of activity. One of these was a colonized Maya town of considerable local importance—a community that finds itself again and again at the center of frontier struggles and local indigenous rebellion against colonial rule. This town in west-central Belize, known until its abandonment in the early 1700s as Tipu, serves today as a case study in the colonial frontier process, one that my colleagues and I have been studying from both archaeological and ethnohistorical points of view.¹⁶ Tipu was deeply influenced by the independent, so-called Itza Mayas of the central Peten, who regarded it as a potential buffer against further Spanish expansion against their own territory. A considerable body of documentary information about this *visita* mission of Maya speakers indicates that Tipu and other indigenous communities under its influence over a wide area of southeastern Yucatan, known at the time of the conquest as Dzuluinicob, slipped back and forth between Maya and Spanish control several times between 1544 and 1707.

The Spanish center that "governed" Tipu and the Dzuluinicob region was the *villa* of Bacalar, a tiny outpost town that struggled against all odds to maintain a semblance of European "civilization" in the midst of a sea of often resistant Maya refugees from northern *encomiendas* (grants in native tribute to individuals or the crown). From this second sphere of influence emanated the customary methods of colonial control over its indigenous hinterland: forced Indian service, the collection of *encomienda* tribute and other forms of taxation,¹⁷ the reduction of forest dwellers, and the imposition of Christian doctrine. Bacalar's efforts to maintain the posture of villa—of a regional governing center—were hampered, however, by its distance from the center of provincial colo-

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nial control at Mérida some seventy leagues away and by the remoteness and scattered settlement pattern of the Maya towns under its control.

Almost under the noses of the ineffective administrators of Spanish law and justice at Bacalar was a third region to their west known as La Pimienta. Nearly unknown until now, this area attracted thousands of runaway Mayas from the northern towns and *encomiendas*, where these people—in the absence of any colonial constraints—pursued an active role in peninsular trade and commodity production, local forms of religious expression, and political activity controlled by a local priestly elite. While not an ancient independent center of Maya life on the scale of Tah Itza and its confederated allies in the Peten, La Pimienta and its central town of Ixpimienta comprised an autonomous expression of Maya frontier resistance that posed a considerable problem to the Spanish governing of Maya subjects throughout much of the peninsula.

I suggest that the dynamic and sometimes violent history of this region demonstrates that our semimythical image of the southern “frontier” is clouded by our preconceptions concerning the isolation and inactivity of the southern tropical forests. What we are learning about Tipu challenges these textually rooted preconceptions and forces us to reconsider the nature of the quality of life and activity that archaeologists and ethnohistorians should be seeking to understand.

To Frederick Jackson Turner and most modern historians, the frontier is the leading edge of civilized expansion, the region between settled land and emptiness.¹⁸ Here, however, I am using the term in a more general sense to apply to those lands and their associated peoples and cultural artifacts that are on or beyond the edge of knowledge or direct interaction with dominant societies. Frontiers have in this sense both cognitive and material referents pertaining to that which is more or less hidden from familiarity, primarily by boundaries of space but also by boundaries of social interaction, time, or cultural knowledge. Our own North American frontiers might thus include Appalachia, the world of the miner’s night shift, and the religious rituals of West Virginia’s snake-handling cults. All frontiers are potentially knowable or familiar, but they may remain forever at the edges of our comprehension.

The concept of frontier oppositions suggests that one person’s home is always another’s frontier, and vice versa. To the dedicated night worker, daytime work is foreign and unfamiliar. The frontier concept therefore implies relativity and structural opposition. Since frontiers are not mere ideational constructs but also real loci of activity, imperfectly sealed from one another, we recognize that frontier oppositions must be mediated by numerous threads of interpenetration. Knowledge of one’s

frontiers literally opens new worlds as one learns the advantages of their discovery and manipulation.

A primary weakness of Turner's vision of the frontier¹⁹ was that he saw the "world beyond" as a vacuum which the frontier would ultimately fill: Turner's frontier was uni-directional, and as it moved forward to the end of emptiness it would ultimately disappear. That the American West, however, was not empty but rather contained native populations who actively resisted expansion is by now fully appreciated. In the Maya Lowlands, as we shall see, the southern frontier was not empty either; its very existence and the activities that characterized it complemented the north in complex and varied ways.

SUBJECTS AND OBJECTS

Nancy Farriss's valuable distinction among modern writers' treatments of the Maya as subjects in their own right, as objects of colonial rule, and as vestiges of the pre-Columbian past forces us to consider the place of Self and Other in our attempt to grasp meaning and activity on the colonial frontiers of Yucatan.²⁰ While to colonial Spanish authors of books and documents the Mayas were inevitably objects, they were simultaneously the embodiment of the Other, and the Mayas of the frontiers beyond the limits of "civilization" were the very epitome of Otherness by virtue of their successes in avoiding or opposing the rules of the European colony. To Spaniards—as well as to modern writers—their Otherness was also embodied in their pre-Columbian heritage, a source of apostate behavior and continuity in pagan stubbornness to recognize the benefits of the Spanish-imposed system of social and moral life. Recognized truth, whether religious or legal, was by definition the Spanish moral, social, and political order, and all that opposed it was deemed the work of the darkest forms of anti-civilized danger.

The very contrast of Self versus Other, which so permeates all contemporary documentation of the colonial Maya, presupposes the absence of a conception of Mayas as subjects in their own right by all but a few of the most intellectually inclined thinkers of the time.²¹ Few such persons imposed their views on Yucatecan society,²² and even these would have been unable to envision the southern frontier of runaways, refugees, and rebels in any but the most object-ridden of perspectives. If to us the frontier appears unknowable except in terms of distant third persons, imagine what it must have seemed to those to whom the frontier represented the very heart of the perceived Maya propensity to backslide from civilized truth.

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The question of Self versus Other inevitably arises as an issue in the reading of the Spanish documentation, especially as one struggles to find the Other through a morass of Self-reflective bias inherent in the sources at our disposal. One aspect of this question is to inquire how it might be possible—to use the language introduced by Farriss—to re-create the native *subject* of ethnohistorical investigation in a bureaucratically oriented corpus of data designed to justify the structures of colonial documentation and thus to treat its dependents as *objects*?

But to dwell too much on the frustrations caused by this overwhelming dilemma is to ignore the richness of the questions it raises and the ways we might turn the problem to our benefit. In particular, recognizing the dilemma forces us to ask how the absence of an understanding of the Other was itself a factor in historical process. Without some grasp of the nature of colonial ethnocentrism we have no means to evaluate our sources or to place them in historical context. Neither can we ignore the fact that the ethnographic reality of Spanish colonial culture presents us with yet another layer in the Self-Other dilemma, as we soon discover that we cannot easily identify ourselves with a Spanish frontier society that in some ways is even more difficult to grasp than the native society for which the ethnohistorian inevitably feels both sympathy and identification—the essentially medieval Spaniard is as foreign to us as is the native. Nor, finally, can we ignore the fact that much of the documentation about the Other concerns not the native object of colonial control but rather other Spaniards about whom the authors of documents were much more interested than they were in their native subjects. The layers of textual obfuscation are deep and sometimes impenetrable.

In considering both colonizers and colonized, I have attempted to keep in mind my own limited understanding of the cultural perceptions of both parties to this history and thus to recognize their extreme Otherness in relation to the modern world. Only a full textual analysis of the documents would satisfy the curious reader about the methods that I have employed in attempting to bridge this gap, and such an analysis is impossible in this work. It is nonetheless from a reflective methodological stance that I have attempted to come to grips with the documentation at my disposal. The journey of the ethnohistorian who must cope with remote times and places is not altogether unlike that of an imaginary ethnographer who is forced to discover the Other regardless of the lack of two-way communication with his or her informants. It is even at times like the frustrating excavations and surveys of the archaeologist, whose informants speak only through their material remains and leavings. In

either case the task of discovery can be only crudely completed, and the ethnohistorian can seldom hope for more.

THE SOUTHERN MAYA FRONTIER IN SPANISH TIMES

Setting the Stage

The frontier region that I shall describe comprised the northern half of modern-day Belize, the northeastern quarter of the Peten (including Lake Peten Itza), and the southeastern portions of Quintana Roo. The Yucatec-speaking provinces that comprised this area at the time of the Spanish conquest are vaguely known today. We do know, however, that Salamanca de Bacalar was located in the southernmost part of the Uaymil province; that the province of Chetumal was confined to northernmost Belize and possibly the southern coast of Quintana Roo; that Tipu, located on the Macal branch of the Belize River near the Guatemalan border, was the capital town of the recently identified province of Dzuluinicob, which probably extended as far north as New River Lagoon; and that La Pimienta was part of an extended region of apostates and runaways in the forests west of Bacalar.

The political geography of the Peten is very poorly known for the early contact period, although it is certain that the so-called Itza dynasty of the Can Eks at Tah Itza held together a loose confederacy of political territories that were concentrated around the Central Lakes region of the Peten. Political factions in this confederacy were to play a major role in maintaining the autonomy of this latter region from Spanish control until the end of the seventeenth century. Directly north of this confederacy was a loosely delineated area known as the Cehaches (who apparently incorporated La Pimienta as well as areas further west) during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but this was less likely a pre-Columbian province than a collection of refugee polities made up predominantly of runaways from the encomiendas of northern Yucatan.

To the southeast of the Itzas was a province known in the seventeenth century as Mopan, whose language was closely related to that of the populations of the central Peten and Yucatan. To the northwest of the Central Lakes region were the Chontal-speaking Putun Acalan, and in southernmost Belize were the Chol-speaking Manches. Both of these non-Yucatec groups were probably marginal to the political events that involved the Yucatec-affiliated Mayas of the southern lowlands, although the Manche Chols played a minor role in Spanish efforts to con-

quer the populations of the Peten during the last years of the seventeenth century.²³

Ever since the Spanish conquest, the northern portion of the Maya Lowlands—an area roughly comprising the present state of Yucatan and the northern parts of the states of Campeche and Quintana Roo—has been to the indigenous Maya inhabitants the land of foreigners (*ts'ulob* or *ts'ul winikob*), whose prophetic destiny it was to enslave and bring a series of disasters upon the Maya inhabitants. This theme is the essence of the Books of Chilam Balam, sacred almanacs and prophetic texts that were worked and reworked over the entire span of the Spanish period.²⁴ With startling symmetry, so too were parts of the southern portion of the Maya Lowlands known to natives of the north as the lands of foreigners—the New River in northern Belize was often called Dzuluinicob ("foreign people"), and the same term was applied to the remote territory south of the New River Lagoon in central and west-central Belize. To the Maya of Yucatan, "foreigners" were those from beyond known lands, peoples whose unknown territories were true frontiers of the civilization they knew.

Although many groups occupied the southern frontiers of Yucatan, I am primarily concerned here with those who appear to be associated directly or indirectly with the territories of Dzuluinicob and La Pimienta. The apparent political center of Dzuluinicob was Tipu, whose conquest-period inhabitants, Scholes and Thompson believed, may have been a group known in the late seventeenth century as Muzul.²⁵ By the mid-sixteenth century, Tipu and its environs were already experiencing a rapid influx of Yucatec speakers from regions further to the north. This migration essentially created a zone of exiles from Spanish colonialism that was to challenge Spanish control over this frontier for much of the next century and a half. The situation at Ixpimienta was almost identical except for the absence of any colonial controls over the refugees, until disastrous efforts to create missions and to impose *repartimientos* (advance payments in return for native products) in the region were initiated in 1622 (see Chapter 6).²⁶

Also of importance to us were the many thousands of Yucatec speakers who, at the time of the Spanish conquest, occupied the entire central and northern Peten and the vast region along the southern fringes of northern Yucatan. The heart of this population, which I believe was culturally identical or at least nearly identical to that of northern Yucatan, was densely populated around the central lakes of the Peten in a confederacy of chiefdom-like groups usually referred to collectively²⁷ as the Itza Maya. The leaders of one of these groups claimed direct descent

from the rulers of Chichen Itza and are often presumed to have been the survivors of those who had fled the political turmoils of precontact Yucatan to seek asylum in the southern jungles. Their identity as Itzas suggests that the northern Maya considered them to be descendants of foreigners of Mexican persuasions, nearly as despised in the Books of Chilam Balam as the Spaniards themselves.²⁸

Despite its "foreign" taint, during the Spanish period the territory of Dzuluinicob, the Itza-dominated heartland, and the vast borderland arc that separated these areas from northern zones of colonial control constituted the principal symbols and perhaps also the organizational machinery that challenged Spanish hegemony over the northernmost provinces of Yucatan. In the most general terms, the Spanish conquest redefined the ancient north-south frontier dichotomy. Before the conquest the southern frontier was, to the north, a land of political refuge for those of "foreign" descent, who in turn pursued a policy of political and economic domination over the indigenous inhabitants of their new land. Following the conquest this frontier became a place of refuge for those who sought to hide or escape from Spanish religious and economic domination—the net result of "flight," as Nancy Farriss has labelled this form of population movement.²⁹ As a refuge zone it could be a hotbed of active resistance, a place where non-Christian religious ceremonies could be practiced openly, and a relatively open land where indigenous economic entrepreneurs could flourish. For those who remained in the south or for those many Yucatec Maya who fled south to share their territory, the north became a newly defined zone of foreigners whose ultimate goal was clearly defined—i.e., complete economic, religious, and political control over the northern indigenous inhabitants and possibly over the southern frontier as well.

The north, then, became a Spanish frontier and the south a Maya one.³⁰ The Maya occupied both sides of the physical frontiers, while the Spanish with few exceptions occupied only the north. For the Maya on both sides of the boundary, however, the south became a symbol of resistance against Spanish control and in some cases the actual headquarters of Maya autonomy movements. The net effect of the continued survival of the southern frontier was to maintain the continued viability of a Maya posture of political resistance not only in the southern forests but also in the villages of northern Yucatan itself. Both the idea and the reality of this process of cross-frontier resistance, with its spiritual symbol in the open frontiers to the south, survived for nearly four centuries. Its final expression was the nineteenth-century Caste War of Yucatan, whose rebellious leadership, the generals and high priests of the Santa Cruz

Maya, founded a Maya chiefdom in exile in the forests of Quintana Roo.³¹

It was in part Spanish disavowal of the habitability of the southern forests that kept the southern frontier open to seditious enterprises that continuously undermined colonial governance in Mérida and its two principal villas, Campeche and Valladolid. From the sixteenth century onward, Spaniards demonstrated little sustained motivation or ability to bring their troublesome frontier under permanent control, due both to the perceived unhealthy, remote, unproductive, and ungovernable characteristics of the region and to the lack of economic and human resources to carry out major conquests in such territory. Only by means of Band-Aid operations such as reductions of runaways from the northern encomiendas could the problem be even partially addressed. Even the so-called "conquest" of Peten Itza in 1697 turned out to be a dismal failure, despite the excellent press given this event before the Spanish court.

TIPU: A CASE STUDY ON THE SPANISH FRONTIER

I seek to demonstrate in this book that no region or localized population—whether independent Maya, Maya under colonial control, or Spanish—on the southern frontiers of Yucatan can be considered in isolation from other regions and populations. My perception of these interactions, however, has developed as a result of a historical journey into the experiences under colonial rule of one of these regions—that dominated by Tipu. It was at Tipu that I first glimpsed the archaeological unfoldings of a community that I had come to know well from the written record, and it was this town that sparked my desire to understand more fully the written record of the indigenous Maya frontier experience.

Located in the heartland of Dzuluinicob on the Macal River in west-central Belize, the frontier Yucatec Maya town of Tipu has recently been the subject of both archaeological and ethnohistorical research. Its importance as one of the principal centers of anti-Spanish rebellion on the southern frontier has provided the opportunity to focus upon its history as a case study in the de-mystification of the southern Maya frontier. We see that even in a place as remote as Dzuluinicob, events transpired for over a century that were of considerable moment for the inhabitants of lands under the control of "civilized" forms of government. It is in learning about such frontiers that we discover that such places exist as cultural forms—as categories which, inherent to the colonial, "civilizing" process, remain part of our own historical consciousness only to be emptied of their former meaning as we restructure our knowledge.

Tipu was hidden in the recesses of old Spanish texts until in 1977 Scholes and Thompson published a seventeenth-century *matrícula* listing inhabitants of this and other towns in Belize and discussed the known history of Tipu itself.³² In 1978, archaeologist David Pendergast and I identified a likely site for Tipu, based on published and unpublished sources and on the presence of Postclassic architectural features. This site was located on the Macal River at a cattle ranch known as Negroman. If the presence of a Spanish visita church could be confirmed, we realized, the identification would be certain, as sporadic missionary activities were known to have taken place at the town during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At that time the only confirmed visita church in Belize was some distance to the north at Lamanai on New River Lagoon, although several others had been mentioned in the Spanish sources.

Test excavations at Negroman began in 1980 and further work continued for three seasons under the archaeological directorship of Robert R. Kautz. Elizabeth Graham directed subsequent seasons from 1984 to 1987 and continues with her associates to analyze the results of the archaeological research. It is now generally accepted that Negroman is in fact the site of Tipu, primarily because of the identification of the ramada-style church found during the first season from which more than 600 Christian burials have been excavated for study by Mark Cohen and his associates.

The site of Tipu was occupied during Preclassic and Classic times, but better understood are the remains of Middle and Late Postclassic ceremonial, civic, and domestic architecture as well as a rich assemblage of Postclassic ceramics and artifacts. Several Historic-period structures have been excavated in a plaza-like arrangement in the general vicinity of the church, identified by the presence of Spanish ceramics and other European artifacts. All indications are that the site was continuously occupied over the precontact–conquest periods, offering a rare opportunity to study an intact community that experienced the earliest forces of Spanish conquest and that survived as a town until the early eighteenth century.

With the archaeological data still under study, my primary concern has been to advance our ethnohistorical knowledge of Tipu as a center for frontier activities. Located far upstream, beyond miles of treacherous rapids, in a small fertile valley in the foothills of the Maya Mountains, Tipu was the last of a string of visita missions extending south-southwest from the villa of Salamanca de Bacalar along a river and land route of more than 200 kms. Bacalar, situated near Chetumal Bay, was itself a

wilderness outpost several days distant from Mérida, the seat of Spanish government in Yucatán. Tipu was several days beyond Bacalar; it was never visited by anyone of importance in the Spanish colonial government.

Another 100 kilometers or so to the west of Tipu was the semi-mythical headquarters of the Can Ek chiefly dynasty at Tah Itza³³ on Lake Peten Itza. To the Spanish, Tipu was a fragile buffer between Christian civilization and the vast Peten pagan heartland. To the Itzas, Tipu was a potential political, economic, and cultural ally in a largely passive struggle against weak but nonetheless threatening Spanish designs to conquer the central Peten. The Tipuans were themselves caught in the middle of what turned out to be an unbalanced distribution of regional power in favor of Maya autonomy. As we shall see, the dynamic quality of Tipu's slippage back and forth between two frontier oppositions—Spanish and Maya—must be understood partly in terms of the special temporal constraints placed upon its activities in the form of recurring and prophetically anticipated periods of time.

Temporal Constraints

Between 1544 and 1707 Tipu was conquered by the Spanish, was forced to pay *encomienda* tribute, rebelled for forty years against all Spanish authority, was recontacted, and cooperated in the 1697 conquest of the Itzas, until its population was finally forcibly removed to Lake Peten Itza in 1707. Although the causes of this series of contradictory events did not appear at first to be more mysterious than those that might characterize any similar frontier situation, it eventually became clear that major events concerning Tipu occurred by a remarkably regular periodicity that corresponded to the *katun* cycles so important in pre-conquest- and Spanish-period Maya society.

The *katun* cycle that apparently affected the history of Tipu and the frontier of which it was a part was composed of periods of 7,200 days.³⁴ Thirteen such katuns, or about 256 years, made up a full *katun* cycle. During the Spanish period, beginning in 1539, a particular *katun* was identified by the name of its first day, beginning that year with a Katun 11 Ahau.³⁵ The next *katun* began in 1559 and was Katun 9 Ahau. The numerical coefficients of the following *katuns* were, then, 7, 5, 3, 1, 12, 10, and 8—bringing us to the fateful Katun 8 Ahau when the Itzas themselves predicted that they would succumb to Spanish rule. The Spanish conquest of Tah Itza in fact occurred in 1697, the first year of that katun.

The Maya believed that each cycle of thirteen *katuns* was in some way a reenactment of those cycles that had come before, so that the char-

acteristics of a particular katun of the previous cycle might be anticipated in the same katun of the current cycle. A further variable in the system allowed the new civil-religious leadership associated with an upcoming katun to begin halfway through the prior katun to assume some of its duties and to anticipate the characteristics of the upcoming period. With such a temporal burden upon Maya social and political life, they took great care to record—albeit in a cryptic, poetic language—the character or history of a current katun in the expectation that this recorded text would be of value 256 years or a full katun cycle in the future. The Books of Chilam Balam, which were maintained, added to, and recopied countless times in Spanish script but in the Maya language, contain many of these katun prophecies—statements simultaneously about the past, the present, and the future.

The evidence for the Maya appropriation of katun prophecies in organizing time and events during the Spanish period has been scanty but suggestive; the Itza conquest has stood out as an exceptional case in the literature. Now, however, we are beginning to discover on frontiers such as Tipu signs of the importance of this most non-Western concept of time and event during Maya confrontations with the Spanish. These signs are for the historical wanderer a glimpse behind a looking glass into an underground world of ideas and activities that enabled the Maya to overcome the physical boundaries of the frontier through a powerful form of ritualized communication.

Edmonson, expanding innovatively on previous studies by Ralph Roys and others, has recently argued for the continued saliency of the katun prophecies in the sociopolitical and cultural life of the Yucatec Maya since the Spanish conquest.³⁶ Practical “underground” knowledge of these prophecies was certainly characteristic of many areas where even the most watchful of Franciscan and secular priests were unable to bring them into the open, but it was on the frontiers and among the leaders of Tah Itza and its allies where their discussion and application was practiced most openly and, therefore, most intensively. There the contest for power and influence over independent and refugee Mayas was applied in a struggle for spiritual patronage and political and economic support that in many ways paralleled and even competed with the Spanish demands for souls and tribute.

I make little effort in this study, however, to relate specific prophecies as they are expressed in the surviving Books of Chilam Balam to forms of Maya behavior during the colonial period. Such a detailed correlation of known prophecy and action is needed, but it raises methodological difficulties that are beyond the scope of this book. Rather, my emphasis is on

the limited but suggestive evidence for the *use* of prophecy in Maya encounters with the Spanish and, more indirectly, on the apparent relationship between certain key events and the katun calendar for the Spanish period. This evidence suggests widespread Maya recognition of the imminence of katun periods, especially in the determination of political stances to be taken toward continuing Spanish rule, continuing Maya independence, and threats of Spanish conquest and reduction. The application of prophecy derived from the katuns appears to have been above all a means of legitimizing and organizing Maya strategies of accommodation, resistance, and rebellion.

Such strategies could best be applied on frontiers such as those that are the subject of this study, just as they were applied during the 1660s in another frontier region south of Sahcabchen.³⁷ The very existence of the demographically dynamic southern frontier made the continuity of Maya culture during the colonial period possible, for it was there that ideas of continuity remained alive and well, free to express themselves. The frontier became a haven for resistance and for the expression of Maya cosmologies of continuity in opposition to Spanish theories of conquest. It provided the basis for structural continuity, even in the face of major changes in the relationships among people and things.

We are reminded of Sahlins' contention, writing of the changes wrought by early European influences on Hawaii, that:

The dialectics of history, then, are structural throughout. Powered by disconformities between conventional values and intentional values, between intersubjective meanings and subjective interests, between symbolic sense and symbolic reference, the historical process unfolds as a continuous and reciprocal movement between the practice of the structure and the structure of the practice.³⁸

But while Sahlins' strenuous efforts to make sense of the contradictions between structure and practice—or between the principles of continuity and transformation—may make sense of the Hawaiian case, the Maya case appears at first glance to be far simpler. The Mayas used the frontier to hide both people and ideas and to maintain an underground of spirited resistance, even while transforming their own society to incorporate aspects of Spanish government and religion. In contrast to those of Hawaii, the Maya "structures of the long run" were little transformed in either a mythical or a pragmatic sense, while their underlying principles remained obscure and virtually unknown to most colonial rulers and practitioners.³⁹

The underlying task of anthropological history in the present case, therefore, must be to discover what ordinarily remained hidden from the European authors of our documents—"ordinarily" because in at least two cases known to us Franciscan friars appear to have been aware of some of the implications of Maya concepts of the appropriation of time for political practice.⁴⁰ To attempt to accomplish such discoveries of the Other in texts in which the cultural meaning of Maya behavior almost always eluded their authors may appear foolhardy at best and impossibly presumptuous at worst. But hindsight and a long view of history grants us the possibility of understanding events and behaviors in a manner that would have been impossible at the time the documents were written. Those readers who doubt these reconstructions of the temporal signification of Maya action may still enjoy a good story which, after all, depends far more on the unravelling of straightforward events, practices, and structures than it does on the demonstration of hidden meanings.

Turning to the specific case of Tipu, the following is a historical sketch of the major known events concerning the town based on a tentative temporal sequence based in turn on the katun cycle of self-fulfilling prophecy.

The Period of the First Encomiendas

Katun 13 Ahau had begun in 1539, half a katun after Francisco de Montejo the adelantado's 1528 arrival at Chetumal on Corozal Bay in northern Belize; 1617 was the last year of Katun 5 Ahau. Not surprisingly, we know the least about this period, which began at Tipu itself with the conquest of Dzuluinicob and its principal town, Tipu, in 1544. It ended on the very eve of the first Franciscan mission to Tipu, which hoped to use Tipu's strategic location as a form of brokerage in the spiritual conquest of the Itzas. No sooner had the first encomiendas of central and northern Belize been established, under the control of a rough-and-tumble lot of Spanish ex-conquistadores at the villa of Salamanca de Bacalar, than rebellion broke out in 1546–1547. The inhabitants of Chanchakan, by then the dislocated headquarters of the Chetumal province and located north of Tipu (perhaps on Progreso Lagoon), killed their *encomendero* in an action associated with the massive rebellion that broke out in late 1546 far to the north near Valladolid.

Mayas were fleeing the encomiendas of northern Yucatan in large numbers during the last half of the century. Many thousands of these escaped to the southern frontier region, and in 1567–1568 (midway through Katun 11 Ahau) signs of frontier rebellion were countered by a

three-pronged reduction effort launched from Bacalar that swept across a vast region of forest, destroying idols, capturing and burning Maya books, and taking into custody rebellious Maya priests and their followers. One of these reductions focused upon activities around Tipu, which was occupied by hostile Maya whose activities included the kidnapping of encomienda Maya from points nearer Bacalar.

For the remainder of this period the Bacalareños struggled to hold on to their twenty or so small encomienda villages, which they kept intact because of the value of the cacao that they produced. It required two months for a single priest to carry out his visita to the villages scattered along the river systems of Belize, and Christian doctrine remained in the hands of Maya *maestros* whose loyalty to the Christian cause was hardly unwavering.

During this period Tipu and its neighbors apparently rebelled against this weak Spanish authority, for in 1608 there was a new reduction in the area that resulted in a claim for the assignment of a new encomienda; still further reductions were pursued in 1615. Tipu was too far south to maintain under control, but its strategic location on the route to Lake Peten Itza must have been too important to ignore.

The Period of the New Encomienda (1618–1637)

The arrival at Tipu of the Franciscans Bartolomé de Fuensalida and Juan de Orbita⁴¹ in 1618—the beginning of Katun 3 Ahau—was likely not a temporal coincidence. According to the Books of Chilam Balam of Tizimin and Chumayel, this was to be a period of violence and defeat.⁴² Whether prophecy or retrospect, this was an accurate appraisal of the situation during the katun that followed. The immediate aim of the Franciscan visit was to seek the peaceful capitulation of the Itzas, who in 1616 or 1617 had sent representatives to Mérida (later said to be false ambassadors) to declare their readiness—presumably in response to politically manipulated prophecies for Katun 3 Ahau—to accept Spanish domination. Orbita, a man of rash temperament, however, foolishly broke the Itzas' principal idol, Tzimin Chac, said to be a replica of a horse left by Cortés at Tah Itza in 1526.

The next year Fuensalida and Orbita found a massive resurgence of "idolatry" at Tipu, to which they responded with the civil "authorities" by burning idols in a bonfire in the plaza and by trying and punishing the offenders. Suspicions were mounting that there was a substantial alliance developing between Tipuans and Itzas. To lose Tipu would have been above all an economic loss to the Bacalareños, as its leaders were

wealthy Maya elites from northern Yucatan who had already begun to expand cacao production.

Throughout Katun 3 Ahau the excessively greedy leaders of Bacalar engaged in heavy extortions of cacao from the southern Maya towns, to which the Maya leaders at Tipu responded by sending messengers with complaints all the way to Mérida. Rebellion in La Pimienta broke out in 1624 with the massacre of a Spanish military party at Sacalum, following upon the execution of Spanish and Tipuan visitors at Tah Itza a few months earlier. By 1631 signs of rebellion were in the air in the Belize missions, resulting in flight from villages on the Sibun and Sittee rivers, where cacao was also the principal crop.

The Period of Resistance and Rebellion (1638–1677)

Widespread rebellion centered at Tipu broke out in 1638, at the beginning of Katun 1 Ahau. The governor of Yucatan made modest efforts to respond to the complaints registered in Mérida in 1637 about Tipu's corrupt priest and the cruel, "barbaric" Bacalareños who exploited the Maya; but he claimed that he could do little due to Bacalar's extreme inaccessibility. By September of 1638 the *cabildo* at Bacalar reported that the Maya were deserting all of their towns in Belize for the remote inland forests. The runaways, they said, claimed that they were being threatened by the Tipuans. The latter declared that they were to obey the "king" of the Tipuans, who in turn threatened to force them to work in the Tipuans' service. If these frightened people did not obey, they would all die, "because at such time the Itzas were to come to kill them, and there were to be many great massacres as well as hurricanes that were to flood the land."⁴³ These warnings, quoted by local Spanish authorities, bear close resemblance to prophecies for this katun recorded in the Books of Chilam Balam of Chumayel and Tizimin.

Tipu's strategy was successful. During 1638 Tipu's leaders forced the abandonment of eight towns in Belize, leaving only six small villages under Bacalar's control. The region was lost to Spanish control, and in 1642 Bacalar was subjected to yet another indignity—an attack by the privateer Diego Lucifer el Mulato, whose men robbed the villa of the church's silver and desecrated the church. The victim of a double frontier—that of independent Mayas to its south and of foreign privateers who sought silver, slaves, and eventually the valuable coastal logwood—Bacalar lost all control as a frontier outpost until its reinforcement in the eighteenth century.

The next four decades (Katuns 1 Ahau and 12 Ahau) were a period of intense disruption throughout Yucatan, characterized by increasing

Maya flight to the frontier, epidemic disease, successive famines, frontier rebellions inspired by millennial prophecy, increasing piracy and foreign control of logwood cutting and export, and repartimiento exploitation by one of the most rapacious governors in the peninsula's history. By 1668 rebellion broke out in the territory southeast of Campeche, and it appeared that the entire frontier arch from west to east was in danger of toppling the harsh but fragile system of surplus extraction that characterized the political economy of Yucatan.

The Period of the Last Epochs (1677–1707)

This final period of Tipu's history opened with the beginning of Katun 10 Ahau, climaxed at the beginning of Katun 8 Ahau with the conquest of Tah Itza in 1697, and closed with the forced removal of Tipu's inhabitants to the shores of Lake Peten Itza in 1707.

In 1678 there was renewed rebellion and flight centered again in the region south of Campeche, leading to massive reductions throughout the southern *montañas*. These reductions, accompanied by destruction of milpas, villages, and "temples of idolatry," reached deep into the Peten and Belize. During this year Tipuan emissaries visited the leader of one of these reductions on a mission of submission, leading to the baptism of more than 600 Tipuans, possibly at Tipu itself.

Tipu played an important role in the so-called Itza conquest. Itza-affiliated representatives in 1695 established Tipu as the base from which they travelled to Mérida in order to declare Itza willingness to submit to Spanish rule. This mission, like that of 1616 or 1617 four katuns earlier, was a failure in that it apparently did not have the full support of the leaders of the Itza confederacy. Nonetheless, Katun 8 Ahau, which was to begin in 1696 or 1697, was believed by many Mayas to signal the inevitable collapse of Itza independence. Tipuans clearly believed in this prophecy, and it is not surprising that they cooperated in the events mounted by the Spanish as they sought the long-awaited Itza prize.

Despite halfhearted, abortive efforts to pursue a spiritual conquest of the Itza, using Tipu as a base, the Itza conquest was ultimately pursued in full military array along a road constructed for that purpose from Mérida and Campeche in the north directly to Lake Peten Itza to the south. The Spanish captured and destroyed Tah Itza, but the conquest itself was a failure. Most of the Maya population fled to the forests and famine set in at the Spanish headquarters, resulting in forced maize acquisitions in the surrounding villages. Increasing English logwood activities on the Belize coast threatened the fragile stability that the Spanish sought to create in the region. It was in this confused context that the Spanish au-

thorities ultimately decided to remove the population of Tipu to join the new mission settlements. Foreign control, its roots in the piracy of the seas, had begun the inexorable process by which this part of the Spanish frontier would ultimately become British territory.

TIPU IN PERSPECTIVE

This highly compressed history of Tipu suggests that we have rediscovered the fugitive Maya frontier in the written text, just as it is beginning to be visualized in the archaeological record. But why have we been successful in penetrating the mysteries of this localized case history while archaeologists and ethnohistorians have heretofore made relatively little progress in finding widespread evidence for life in the Southern Maya Lowlands during the Postclassic and Spanish periods?

To return to my original propositions, I would maintain that many modern investigators, somewhat like our Spanish forebears, have misperceived the nature of this "world beyond." They have assumed that since the Collapse this forested frontier has been an isolated, nearly empty world composed of scattered peoples hiding from civilization. The image is that of the forested Lacandon—anticivilization in search of refuge from a larger reality. This romantic image suits preconceptions not only of the Collapse and its regional aftermath but also of present-day jungle peoples throughout the world.

Once we understand the frontier phenomenon as a political, economic, and demographic process, we grasp that the image of static, isolated places beyond is but a cultural construct. As we have seen in the case of Tipu, frontier interactions occur with the movement of ideas, individuals, goods, and activities back and forth between places, a movement often hidden from the watchful eyes of those who seek to monitor it. It is this movement, this process of activity that circumvents the rigidity of frontiers as places, that defines our proper subject matter.

The task, again, is to demystify the frontier and, in the process, to reconstruct it as a reality in the larger regional and world system. The archaeological and written texts of places like Tipu—and there were many such places—should guide us in discovering that that which is now hidden from us may be that which is really important. The physical remains are elusive because the style of life was elusive—impermanent villages of fugitives who sought to undermine a more visible civilization by means of millennial notions that have survived in a few fragile re-copied Maya books and in some old Spanish correspondence. These places, however, were supremely alive, swarming with ideas both writ-

ten and spoken, with pragmatic programs for rebellion and with the organizational skills to recruit followings and mount effective resistance.

The paucity of visual texts, then, must not be interpreted as indicating an absence of complex systems of cultural meaning and of social and political activity. When we discover these systems, they turn out to be far more interesting than our myths could ever have predicted.

OVERVIEW

The chapters that follow begin with a description of the initial Spanish conquests of southeastern Yucatan and of the earliest Maya resistance to Spanish-imposed rule. Following a discussion of both Maya and Spanish society on this frontier, the text then proceeds to a chronological account that seeks to interpret the Spanish record in light of temporally mandated Maya resistance movements.

Chapter 2 describes the impact of the earliest Spanish contacts and conquest activities upon the indigenous populations of the Maya provinces of Uaymil, Chetumal, and Dzuluinicob. Previously identified and recently discovered sources provide the basis for analyzing (1) the impact of Francisco de Montejo's first 1528 *entrada* to Chetumal on later territorial resistance; (2) the 1531 foundation and later abandonment of Villa Real on Chetumal Bay by Alonso Dávila; (3) the violent and vicious conquest of most of Belize by Melchor and Alonso Pacheco during 1543–1544 and their establishment of the villa of Salamanca de Bacalar; and (4) the establishment by the Pachecos and their followers of the first *encomiendas* around Salamanca de Bacalar and south to Tipu on the Macal River.

This chapter also discusses the earliest known Maya rebellion in this territory at the new *encomienda* of Chanlacan in 1546 and the progressive local Spanish application of the techniques of *reducción* and *congregación* in order to retrieve Maya runaways. Of particular interest are several large-scale reductions deep into Belize by Juan Garzón in 1567–1568, as these *entradas* provide important evidence for the extent of Maya settlement and the political geography underlying Maya rebellion.

These events demonstrate that the southernmost pre-Columbian political territories remained intact during the early decades of colonization, despite the economic and demographic impact of conquest and disease. Although the ultimate effects of Spanish policies on the Maya population were nothing short of devastating, the frontier area became a potentially powerful resistance region in which traditional leaders of surviving polities were forced underground.

In Chapter 3, the discovery of extensive documentation on the small

Spanish settlement at the villa of Salamanca de Bacalar makes possible a detailed discussion of the attitudes and social characteristics of the local Spanish frontier society with whom the Maya population was forced to interact. A series of structural transformations in Bacalar society are discussed in light of wider historical events—including Maya rebellion and attacks by pirates—that ultimately forced the community into exile at a new location further to the north. The demographic history of the Spanish, Indian, and *casta* populations is discussed, as are details of the community members' social, economic, and political roles. Through a discussion of the internal structure of Salamanca de Bacalar colonial society it becomes possible to understand the early decline of the community's Spanish elite cabildo and its importance as a center for trade as well as its increasingly dependent status upon absentee powerholders in the region of Valladolid to the north.

Chapter 4 turns to the Maya frontier itself and provides some of the knowledge that is needed to begin to understand the objects of colonial policy as subjects in their own right. The principal aim of this chapter is to establish the regional identity of the southeastern Maya frontier in terms that integrate both the indigenous and the colonial worlds. Thus, the provinces discovered by the Spanish are examined in light of the later transformations that they experienced under colonial rule. I consider briefly the structure of colonial Maya society (including the organization of Maya cabildos and elite Maya control over cash crop production) and the importance of migration and flight from Spanish control centers in the north to an understanding of the demographic characteristics, refugee status, and strongly rebellious posture of the Belize settlements. This chapter also includes a discussion of the strategies employed by the Mayas in locating their communities and an interpretation of the Maya population data available for the jurisdiction of Salamanca de Bacalar.

From 1638 to 1695 the Mayas of Belize, particularly those around the principal Dzuluinicob town of Tipu, were successful in obtaining and retaining their autonomy from Spanish rule. The causes of the rebellion are directly related to increased Spanish efforts to reestablish dormant missions and encomiendas beginning about 1608 and the efforts of Franciscan missionaries to use Tipu as the base from which a "spiritual" conquest of the Itzas would be pursued. During this period we can see a dramatic reassertion of indigenous cultural paradigms in which katun prophecies that legitimized and fostered increased Maya resistance were a paramount element.

Beginning the chronicle of Maya resistance to Spanish rule, Chapter

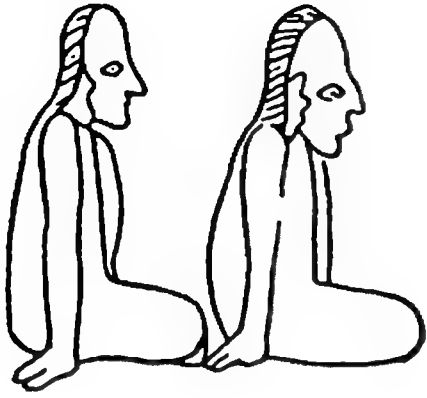
5 describes renewed Spanish efforts in the early seventeenth century to pacify the southeastern frontier, the first serious Franciscan efforts to take advantage of Itza signs of readiness to accept Spanish domination, and the ultimate resistance of the Itzas and the Maya intermediaries at Tipu to Spanish designs. Maya attitudes and behaviors, it is argued, were molded by the prophecies of Katun 3 Ahau, which opened in 1618. These behaviors climaxed in a series of events, described in Chapter 6, that resulted in massacres of Spanish military parties—whose designs included the conquest of the Itzas—and their Maya supporters at Tah Itza and Sacalum in 1624.

The renewal of Maya rebellion at the beginning of Katun 1 Ahau, which opened in 1638, is discussed in Chapter 7. In the successful expulsion of Spanish control over the territory that is now northern Belize, we discover not only the importance of myth and prophecy but also the dialectics of population management by both Maya leaders (who concentrated Maya populations around Tipu) and Spanish leaders (who concentrated others around Salamanca de Bacalar). The aftermath of this rebellion—a series of unsuccessful Spanish efforts during the 1640s and 1650s to regain lost souls and territory—is outlined in Chapter 8.

Finally, Chapter 9 explores the role of these rebellious territories in the Spanish initiation of the final colonial efforts to crush the Itzas, beginning with the decision by the Mayas of Tipu to give in to Spanish control during the massive entradas of 1680 and with an abortive but dislocating major attempt to establish the groundwork for the Itza conquest in 1697. Tipu's role in the preparation for this conquest is summarized, including the part it played in the Itzas' political mission to Mérida in 1695 and the remissionization of Tipu by secular priests in 1696. Ironically, with the resettlement of the Tipu Mayas on Lake Peten Itza in 1707, the Spanish ultimately sealed their loss of Belize to the encroachments of English logwood and, later, mahogany cutters. Nor did the Spanish have much success in "conquering" the Peten, whose population gradually melted into the forests, becoming for a time yet another frontier of uncooperative, ungoverned Mayas.

The rendering of Mayan place names throughout this text, with few exceptions, has followed the precedent set by Ralph L. Roys in his *Political Geography of the Yucatan Maya*, and Mayan surnames follow the spellings established in his "Personal Names of the Maya of Yucatan."⁴⁴ The reversed c, an earlier usage, is rendered as dz in proper names. In cases where the meaning of a Mayan word or phrase is discussed, or where a Mayan term is used in the text, I have generally followed the alphabetical practices established in the recent *Diccionario maya Cordemex*.⁴⁵

2: CONQUEST AND RESISTANCE



The fifth rulers *of the series* were named Pachimalahix and also Macuaabin, his younger brother, sons of Paxua. In the time of this ruler (Pachimalahix), five or six years after having arrived at Chactemal, [which lies] beyond Bakhalal, he imposed tribute upon them.¹

Forty-one years ago Robert Chamberlain published the first modern synthesis of the early encounter between Mayas and Spaniards in the Uaymil and Chetumal provinces. Because the few sources available to him provided little detail about these remote territories, he remained unaware that Iberians had pursued their conquest activities by means of forays deep into the territory that is now Belize.² He likewise had no way of knowing that yet a third southeastern frontier province, Dzuluinicob, lay south of Chetumal in central Belize, and that this province served as a seat of indigenous resistance to colonial rule for the next century and a half. Our knowledge of the earliest Indian-European encounters in these three regions—encounters which set the stage for all later colonial history in southeastern Yucatan—is still woefully inadequate. Armed, nonetheless, with new documentation, we must pursue a thorough reexamination of old information and provide a resynthesis refreshed by new evidence and a new vision of the historical reality of this important but ineluctable center of Maya independence.

From these early records we discover that the southeasternmost pre-Columbian political territories of Yucatan remained viable during the early decades of colonization, despite the economic and demographic impact of conquest and disease. We also discover evidence for a steady increase in Maya political resistance during the quarter century following the Pacheco conquest. At the beginning, this southern frontier resistance activity was related directly to the resistance of groups far to the north, especially near the villa of Valladolid. By 1568, however, the Maya frontier had taken on an identity of its own, with indications of widespread religious millenarianism and movements toward greater independence from Spanish control.

The primary, although unstated, purposes of the Spanish conquest of this region appear to have been to open up trade passages along the Belize coast between Honduras and Guatemala, to set the stage for the conquest of the interior provinces, and to prevent the flow of runaways from the northern provinces. Notwithstanding the fact that these developments had devastating demographic, social, and political effects on the Maya population, they signalled the transformation of the frontier area into potentially powerful resistance regions, forcing into "exile" the traditional leaders of existing native polities.

This chapter, then, seeks to reevaluate the evidence considered by Chamberlain in light of new documentary materials that elucidate the earliest sixteenth-century contacts between Spaniards and Mayas in the regions that today comprise the northern half of Belize and southeasternmost Quintana Roo. From these materials we can begin to glimpse the dynamics of the earliest struggles of indigenous Maya polities in the face of Spanish efforts to pacify this intractable frontier.

FIRST SPANISH CONTACTS AT CHETUMAL

We are indebted to a Spanish adventurer named Alonso Luján for his eyewitness accounts of the adelantado Francisco de Montejo's first encounter with the Mayas of Chetumal in 1528 as well as his lieutenant Alonso Dávila's later efforts to colonize the Chetumal and Uaymil provinces. Luján presented his accounts to Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, the great Spanish historian who remains our sole known source for these initial contacts. Despite embellishments and gaps in Oviedo's interpretation of Luján's memories, this account remains indispensable and deserves careful analysis.³

Oviedo, through Luján's account, informs us that in 1528 Francisco de Montejo and eight or ten of his men set off in a carabelle down the east coast of Yucatán in search of a location better than that of his recently established settlement of Salamanca near Xelha, opposite the south end of Cozumel Island.⁴ His lieutenant, Alonso Dávila, was to lead a parallel movement with some forty Spanish men by land, but his party was led inland some thirty leagues by his Maya guides. These guides hoped to separate Dávila from Montejo, who was later to hear at Chetumal that Dávila and his men had been killed.

The Spanish later concluded that this strategy to separate the two parties had been masterminded by the famous shipwrecked mariner

Gonzalo Guerrero. Oviedo, presumably paraphrasing Luján, described Guerrero as a Spanish nobleman who had completely adopted Maya culture:

[Guerrero was] a sailor, said by the Indians to have been in the land since one Aguilar, the interpreter whom Cortés took to the conquest of New Spain, and other Christians had been lost in a carabelle on that coast. And this Gonzalo, the sailor, had been of the earldom of Niebla. He had already been converted into an Indian and was [in fact] much worse than an Indian. He was married to an Indian woman. His ears and tongue were disfigured by sacrifice, and his body decorated and painted like that of an Indian; and he had a wife and children.⁵

Guerrero and Gerónimo de Aguilar had been captured on the east coast of Yucatán in 1512 following the shipwreck of Juan de Valdivia's exploratory mission. Aguilar had been ransomed at the Isla de Yucatan by Cortés in 1519 and later served as Cortés's interpreter, as noted by Oviedo. Aguilar claimed that Guerrero had been behind the Maya attack on Francisco Hernández de Córdoba at Cabo Catoche in 1517 and that he had refused to join Cortés in 1519 because he was married to a Maya woman, had three children, and was "*cacique y capitán*" among the Indians.⁶ Guerrero's move to Chetumal sometime during the next ten years suggests that the Mayas of Ecab near Cabo Catoche may have been in alliance with those of Chetumal.⁷

Some eighty leagues from Salamanca, Montejo's vessel reached the coastal town of Chetumal. Several of his men went ashore and learned from three or four Indians whom they captured that a "Christian like those of the carabelle" was living among them, having once been a slave but now being free and accepted by his captors as a member of the native community. These informants said that he spoke Maya well and that his ears and tongue, like those of the Mayas, had been "wounded and bled when they make their sacrifices."

This news encouraged Montejo, who hoped to be able to jog Guerrero's memory of his Christian past. He wrote Guerrero a letter in Spanish reminding him of the meaning of Christian doctrine and requesting his assistance in "the pacification and baptism of these people." Oviedo included in his text what he made to appear to be a copy of this letter, quoted in full. He also "quoted" Guerrero's response, written on the same page that Montejo had sent him: "Sir, I kiss the hands of your mercy. And as I am a slave, I am not free, although I am married and

have a wife and children. And I am at peace with God. And you, Sir, and the Spaniards will have a good friend in me.”⁸ Luján claimed, however, that Guerrero was no friend of the Spaniards, maintaining that he induced the inhabitants of Chetumal to construct barricades and to dig defensive pits in order to fortify their town. Whether or not this claim was valid, or whether Guerrero was in fact held as a captive, cannot, of course, be assessed.

The Mayas at Chetumal then attacked the Spaniards, and Montejo at one point feared defeat. They informed Montejo that Dávila was dead, just as they sent messages to Dávila that Montejo and his party had all died. Thus they made their peace with the now distressed Montejo, giving the all but defeated party of Spaniards fowls, maize, supplies, and water.

Montejo then continued his reconnaissance of the southern coast to within thirty leagues of Honduras. By the time he had returned to the northern coast, Dávila, thinking that Montejo and his party were dead, had moved the small settlement at Salamanca to Xamanha [Zamanca], a fishing town “where they had first run into the cacique of Cozumel, when he went to marry his sister.”⁹ Any future plans to establish a villa at Chetumal were postponed as a result of Montejo’s and Dávila’s subsequent activities in Acalan and Tabasco until 1531, when Dávila set off by land once again to the province of Chetumal.

As a result of this first contact at Chetumal the Spanish became aware of the sophistication of Maya military and intelligence tactics, even though they gave credit for such strategies to the ex-patriot Guerrero. If we assume the actual existence of Guerrero—and the circumstances under which he has entered history are difficult to affirm—we can certainly conclude that the Maya knew much more about the Spanish than vice versa, and that they must have found him useful as long as he might live. But Guerrero appears to have died or left the province by the time Dávila founded Villa Real at the abandoned Chetumal in 1531, and there is no evidence that the military tactics used by the Chetumal leaders and their neighbors several years after their encounter with Montejo were any different from those used by Mayas throughout this region. In both the 1528 and 1531–1532 episodes, in fact, Maya strategies were eminently “native” and conformed to patterns of behavior characteristic of the Maya response to the Spanish throughout this early period, including the use of fortifications, the tactic of site abandonment, the use of misrepresentation to confuse the enemy, and the presentation of gifts as symbols of truce.

THE ESTABLISHMENT AND ABANDONMENT OF VILLA REAL

Alonso Dávila, who continued to serve as Montejo's lieutenant governor and royal accountant during the first efforts to conquer Yucatán, attempted in 1531 and 1532 to pacify the Cochua, Uaymil, and Chetumal provinces. He hoped to find gold in the area; but save for his discovery of worked gold at Chequitaquil, which was lost to hostile Mayas who attacked his messengers while they carried it through the Cochua province, he was unsuccessful in achieving this elusive goal. Furthermore, he faced such extreme hostility throughout the region that after losing a number of men and horses he had to abandon the project entirely and retreat down the coast of Belize to Puerto de Caballos. The accounts of his activities are, of course, of major significance for our understanding of the contact-period Maya political, social, and economic reality of this region. Equally important, Dávila's experience allows us to consider what must have transpired in this region over the succeeding twelve years of Spanish absence that made it possible for the infamous Pachecos to accomplish in 1544 what for Dávila's party was impossible in 1531—that is, the effective destruction of native resistance in Uaymil and Chetumal.

Only two sources provide accounts of the activities that led to Dávila's establishment of Villa Real at Chetumal and of his party's encounters with the resistant Mayas who forced him into ignominious retreat.¹⁰ Alonso Luján had remained a member of Dávila's party and provided Oviedo with an account of this episode as well. How many years after the fact Luján provided these reports we do not know, although he appeared to have forgotten—or simply glossed over—certain major "facts" in his *relación* of this later, more involved event. The second source was Dávila himself, who provided a detailed account before the members of the cabildo of Puerto de Caballos in June 1533, shortly after he had arrived there following his party's retreat from Villa Real. These two sources differ in certain details, and the biases of reportage reflect the interests of the respective authors. Taken together, however, they provide complementarity and detail that is unusual for the period in an area as remote as this one.

In considering how best to present these two complex and important accounts, I concluded that it was necessary to compress their essential content and to juxtapose these summaries side by side, allowing the reader to see how they differ in detail and emphasis. The two sources

are quite different. While Dávila was most concerned with justifying the ignominy of his retreat from Cochua and his abandonment of Villa Real, Luján's account emphasizes the bravery of the Spanish men and is tinged with self-serving bravado. Dávila's is the more detailed account in most respects, although Luján's presents information of a more ethnographic nature. In a few cases there are slight differences in the account of places passed, but the consistency between them is quite remarkable.

The reader who finds such details as appear below burdensome may wish to skip directly to the section that follows ("The Uaymil and Chetumal Provinces in Perspective"), using Map 2 as a guide to the interpretation of these documents.

Departure from Campeche (Salamanca)

Dávila: Dávila and his party departed from Campeche (then known as Salamanca) in mid-1531 with fifty men and thirteen horses.

Luján: They departed from Campeche (Salamanca) two or three months after it had been established, taking horses and men brought by Spaniards from Mexico. They took almost seventy-five men and fifteen horses.

Comment: Dávila's more conservative account of the size of his party is probably the correct one, as he was able to account for every man and horse throughout the entire episode. Luján may well have included in his larger figure various Maya guides and carriers. In any case the party was so small as, in hindsight, to make Dávila appear foolhardy for attempting such a dangerous undertaking, through unknown inland territories with so little military support.

Trip to Chable and Messages to and from Chetumal

Dávila: They arrived at Tulma in the Cochua (Sochuaque in original) province; this town was unoccupied and overgrown. From there they went to the town of Chable. Dávila forced the lords of that town to go to Chetumal on the seacoast to summon the lord of that town to come peacefully (i.e., bearing gifts) to him. The town of Bacalar, subject to the lord of Chetumal, was located on the path from Chable to Chetumal.

The lords of Chable returned with a hostile message from the lords of Chetumal, stating that they would not come to meet him "but would rather declare war, giving us the chickens on spears and the maize on arrows."

Luján: They travelled through the province of Tutuxio (Tutul Xiu) for thirty leagues and the province of Cochua (Cohuam in original) for forty leagues.

Comment: The location of Tulma in the Cochua province is unknown. From this point on it becomes increasingly clear that in reaching Chable the Spaniards had passed into the Uaymil province. Bacalar, located between Chable and Chetumal on the lake of the same name that formed the eastern boundary of the Uaymil province, was considered by local inhabitants to be under the control of Chetumal. From the quotation at the head of this chapter we may assume that Chetumal's lords were foreigners—speakers of Chontal Maya—from the Acalan region. The control that they exercised over Bacalar would presumably have been in the form of tribute payment or labor exaction.

Departure for Mazanahau

Dávila: Dávila left Chable for Chetumal with half his men and horses, all the lords of Chable, and some of the lords from the province of Uaymil. They passed large lakes along the way and reached a lake which prohibited their traveling further by land. They crossed the lake, which was half a league across, in canoes. From the shore of the lake, they went in the canoes to a town on the coast.

Luján: In the province of Uaymil (Guaimill in original) they stayed in the town of Mazanahau (Mazanaho in original) for about twenty days. This town had nearly 3,000 houses.

Comment: The provinces of Cochua and Uaymil were apparently at peace with one another. The party must have gone by Lake Xoca (Laguna San Felipe, north of Lake Bacalar) on the way to Lake Bacalar, which they crossed in canoes, presumably provided for them at Bacalar (see below). Dávila's "town on the coast" may have been Mazanahau, where, according to Luján, they stayed for some time. Later references to Mazanahau make it clear that it was actually some distance inland, although it might have been near enough to the coast, connected to the sea via waterways, to give the impression of a coastal orientation (see below). From Dávila's own account, we might presume that they had crossed the southern end of Lake Bacalar and had paddled along the passages to the Río Hondo.

Departure from Uaymil and Arrival at Chetumal

Dávila: From this town they went by sea in the canoes for three leagues to Chetumal, which they found to be completely deserted. Considering the location secure and with many cornfields and fruit trees, they then decided to settle in Chetumal.

Luján: They left for Chetumal with the principal men from Mazanahau and Yumpeten, a town the same size as Mazanahau. On the edge of

Uaymil province they crossed a lake twelve leagues long in canoes that had been given to them by the Indians of Bacalar (Bakalal in original), a canoe-making, trading town.

They found Chetumal (Chitemal in original) deserted and without food (despite the glowing comments provided by Luján in the accompanying footnote and Dávila's account of maize fields and fruit trees).¹¹ Chetumal was a town of 2,000 houses, located two leagues from the sea-coast and "almost surrounded by water since the coast is on one side and the lake on the other." The distance from the shore to the town was two *tiros de ballesta* (two crossbow shots).¹²

Comment: Here Luján added further information about the town of Chetumal to be considered later. The complex issue of the location of Chetumal is considered in the Appendix. Mazanahau would have been located between Bacalar and the mouth of the Río Hondo. It is likely that Mazanahau was the "Guazam" indicated as a "ruined town" on a 1726 Bacalar reconnaissance map.¹³ Guazam was near the point at which one of the waterways (presumably Río Chac or Chac Creek) connecting the south end of Lake Bacalar joins the Río Hondo. It was almost certainly the same as Mazanila, a seventeenth-century cacao-producing crown pueblo (one that pays tribute to the crown rather than to an individual) near Bacalar. Yumpeten, whose lords also joined Dávila's party on his first visit to Chetumal, was apparently located a short distance north of Lake Bacalar on Lake Nohbec, as may be seen on the 1878 map of Yucatán by Hübbe and Aznar Pérez.¹⁴ These three towns (Bacalar, Mazanahau, and Yumpeten), along with Chable (see below), appear from the accounts of Dávila and Luján to have comprised the core of the Uaymil province, from which it must be concluded that this "province" comprised little more than Lake Bacalar and its immediate environs.

Establishment of Villa Real

Dávila: After returning to Chable to pick up the rest of his party that he had left there, Dávila returned to Chetumal and established Villa Real at the deserted Maya town.

Luján: Dávila established Ciudad Real at the location of Chetumal.

Comment: Luján described Chetumal as a town of 2,000 houses, which would have made it somewhat smaller than both Mazanahau and Yumpeten, with nearly 3,000 houses each. These figures were clearly exaggerations, as were similar numbers indicated for the number of warriors whom they encountered at the wood fortifications, but we cannot discount the possibility that each of these was a town of considerable population.

According to Luján, Chetumal was a honey-producing town with one to two thousand hives made of logs cemented at the ends, the same method used in contemporary Maya communities. Each hive was carved with scrollwork and leafy designs, with the mark or symbol of its owner, presumably in hieroglyphic writing. Around the houses were orchards of mamey and cacao.

Defeat of Chequitaquil

Dávila: From Chetumal they went four leagues by sea with five horses and half his men to attack the lord of Chetumal and some of his warriors at Chequitaquil. The Spanish defeated them and took 600 pesos of gold. One of the horses was killed.

Luján: They went with six horses and twenty-four men in double canoes up the coast to attack the lord of Chetumal and all his people who were with him. They killed many Indians and took sixty prisoners. It was learned that Gonzalo Guerrero was dead. They lost one horse, who was killed by a spear, but they found 1,000 pesos worth of gold jewelry as well as jewelry made of precious stones.

Comment: Chequitaquil appears to have been four leagues north of Chetumal along the coast. The horses were taken in *falcas*, made of two canoes lashed together so that the horses could balance between them.

Messengers Are Sent to Montejo

Dávila: Dávila sent the captured gold with six messengers to the adelantado Montejo, giving them sixty days to return.

Luján: Dávila sent the gold with six messengers, three on horseback and three archers, to Montejo.

They Wait in Villa Real for Messengers to Return

Luján: They waited for the messengers in Villa Real for more than a year. Food supplies were used up, and they had to plant their own crops with a few friendly Indian servants. The surrounding natives began a long siege on the villa, after which only forty Spaniards and five horses were still alive. Ten men were seriously maimed.

Comment: Dávila seems to have blocked nearly a year from his memory (see below), if Luján's account is correct. During that year no word was heard from the messengers, and the villa remained under heavy siege.

Return to Uaymil and Cochua and News of Messengers' Death

Dávila: Fifteen days after the messengers departed, Dávila went with twenty men and three horses to Mazanahau. They found signs of war, as Mazanahau was fortified and prepared to attack them. They skirted the town and approached from behind the fortifications. There they "re-assured" the inhabitants of Mazanahau, demanding maize and fowls from them.

Luján: Dávila set out with twenty-four men and three horses and returned across the lake. He was peacefully received in Uaymil, where he learned of the death of his messengers and heard that Montejo had been attacked and had left for Mexico; it was said that all the land was in rebellion.

Dávila: This Spanish party went from Mazanahau to Chable, which was six leagues further along the road. They found Chable fortified and hostile, but approaching it from the rear they found it deserted. They stayed four days in Chable and sent for the inhabitants, who eventually returned. The Spaniards "reassured" them, and upon their demands, the Chable inhabitants sent food supplies ahead to Villa Real. At Chable, Dávila heard a report from an Indian that his messengers had died in La Hoya, thirteen leagues further along the road toward Campeche.

Comment: The differences in these two accounts suggest that Luján's memory was imprecise. Assuming that Chable was reached from Mazanahau through Bacalar, as appears to have been the case, and that they had passed through Chable on their arrival in the territory via Lake Xoca, a distance of six leagues from Mazanahau would have placed Chable on Lake Xoca itself. This suggests that Chable might have been the town known in later years as Xoca. It was clearly in the Uaymil province. La Hoya, on the other hand, was in the Cochua province, and its location is unknown.

The Lords of Uaymil Offer Cooperation in Punishing the Murderers

Dávila: Dávila and his party returned to Villa Real to wait out the sixty days given the messengers to return, in case the message was false. After this time they did not return, so he left Villa Real with twenty-two men, three on horses, to retrace the path taken by the messengers.

Arriving at Bacalar, he contracted with the lords from another town to carry his letters to Campeche. He paid them for a month, but they did not return in a reasonable time.

Dávila met with the lords of the Uaymil province and told them his intention to pursue his return journey to Campeche. They agreed to ac-

company the Spaniards and feigned an intention to fight against the province of Cochuah (Anchuaque).

Luján: Dávila decided to punish those of Cochua who had murdered the messengers, requesting the assistance of the Indians of Uaymil, which they offered. He set out with 600 Indians and his Spanish companions.

Departure from Uaymil to Cochua Province

Dávila: Dávila left Bacalar with his twenty-two men, three on horseback, to continue on the path toward Campeche.

Luján: Dávila set out with 600 Indians and his Spanish companions.

Dávila: Arriving at Chable, they picked up the path to the Cochua province. At this point they realized that the lords who accompanied them were up to no good; however, they decided not to take them prisoner in the hope that they might fight against those of Cochua as enemies.

They left Chable and slept three leagues further along the road.

Comment: Dávila hoped that traditional enmities between the Uaymil and Cochuah provinces would serve him well in his efforts to "punish" the murderers of his messengers who now possessed the gold taken from Chequitaquil. He knew that this strategy had worked elsewhere in New Spain but was nervous about the loyalty of his numerous Uaymil companions.

Return to Cochuah and Hostilities There

Dávila: The day after leaving Chable they travelled four more leagues until arriving at the first Cochua province town, which was fortified. Among those in the fortification were some of the lords who had accompanied Dávila; only two of them (who were carrying the Spaniards' loads) remained, and of these the renegades killed one. He saved the other one's life. His men entered the fortification and defeated the enemy (over 3,000) with crossbows. The town beyond the fortifications had been burned. Three of his men were wounded, and one died. They suffered intense thirst, as the well had been filled.

Luján: A quarter of a league beyond the first Cochua town they found many warriors hidden behind a fortification about an arrow's shot from the path. Deserted upon seeing the fortification by the Indians who accompanied them, the Spaniards were left on their own to engage in a major battle against innumerable people. They suffered much thirst, as the wells were dry. Cutting a knot in the cord that held the fortification

together they managed to pull out one log and thus enter the fortification, eventually defeating the defenders. Three Spaniards were wounded and later died; three others later died of thirst. One horse was killed.

They found the town beyond burned and the well filled with dirt. The Spaniards removed the dirt by lowering Indian boys into the well.

Comment: From these and other passages we learn that log fortifications had been set up along the paths, near the entrances to the Maya towns. Behind these entrances volleys of arrows were shot at the Spaniards, whose only effective strategy had formerly been to approach them from the rear. We also learn that the boundary of the Cochua province was four leagues beyond Chable, confirming that Uaymil was a narrow province encompassing lakes Xoca and Bacalar. Dávila had had good reason to fear the loyalty of his Uaymil companions, as they had planned all along to join those of Cochua and attack the Spaniards at the first Cochua town.

The Spanish Retreat from Cochua

Dávila: The next day they went three leagues further on and passed around another fortified town, from which the natives fled and where the Spaniards stayed for two days. Two leagues further along they met another heavily manned fortification that they could not break through. Here eleven of Dávila's men were wounded in battle, and from here they began their retreat.

Luján: Two days after the battle they ran into another fortification, said to be manned by those who had killed the messengers. The fortification was made of two walls of wood and trees. The ensuing battle resulted in deaths of many Indians; nearly all the Spaniards except for Dávila were wounded. They retreated.

Dávila: The Indian whose life Dávila had saved, who turned out to be a trader, led them by a pack path he knew that went toward Chable.

Luján: They spent the first night in a small town of about ten houses along the path. The one remaining Uaymil Indian led them there "and saved their lives." They left this place two hours before daybreak out of fear of attack, as they were being chased. Promising to make him a great lord "in that land," Dávila asked the remaining Uaymil Indian to take them to Chetumal. The Indian took them by a back path toward Uaymil, passing a town on the way.

Dávila: They reached a lake that they crossed with difficulty. Warriors chasing them arrived in a clearing but did not accept a challenge to fight. They met more warriors on the way.

Luján: They forded a muddy lake with difficulty, two *tiros de ballesta*

across. They were attacked by warriors who chased them into the forest on the other side. Luján chased them away on horseback. The path was covered by trees felled by a hurricane that had recently passed over the area. They arrived at midnight at a town with ten houses.

Return to Chable

Dávila: They reached Chable three days later. They entered the town through an area where women and townspeople were confined, bypassing the warriors manning the fortifications along the regular path. The warriors ran away.

Luján: They walked three more days, surviving on honey. The area was deserted. The loyal Indian told Dávila that they would arrive in Mazanahau the next day and that this town was only two leagues from the lake where they had left the canoes; however, he expected resistance there. Dávila gave a stirring speech to his companions. The watchman for the path had a miraculous vision of a Santiago (St. James), their patron, with six or seven other knights on horseback; Santiago told the watchman to go and tell Dávila not to fear. This miracle gave the Spaniards renewed courage.

At daybreak they reached a town with many Indians [apparently Chable], but they passed the town without waking up its inhabitants.

Comment: Luján's account of not waking up the inhabitants of the town identified by Dávila as Chable is clearly fanciful, but the account of the miracle of St. James was probably not. The Spaniards had apparently left their canoes on the shore of Lake Bacalar, which they would recover and then paddle on to Mazanahau.

Return to Mazanahau

Dávila: They left Chable the next morning for Mazanahau, which was the nearest town to the sailing point to Villa Real. They arrived at Mazanahau and were greeted peacefully, staying there for two days.

Luján: They arrived at Mazanahau at ten a.m. the same day they passed the sleeping town. They entered it and found out that the Indians were in the bush outside the town along a path waiting to fight them. Only the women and children were in the town. They sent messages to the others to come, which "by the grace of God" they did "with their bad intentions very changed."

Comment: This information further confirms the location of Mazanahau south of Lake Bacalar near the Río Hondo. From this episode it is clear that Luján had earlier confused Chable (the "sleeping town") with Mazanahau.

Departure for Villa Real

Dávila: The Spaniards left Mazanahau in canoes provided for them, arriving later in Villa Real.

Luján: The Spaniards left Mazanahau in their own canoes, which the Indians had appropriated in the Spaniards' absence; they were provided with supplies by the Indians, who were amazed and shocked to see the Spanish party alive. They arrived in Chetumal, where they had left a horse, a mare, and eighteen or twenty maimed and sick Spaniards, whom they found alive. *Novenas* were held in the church. One of the returning Spaniards died.

Attempts to Send Messages to Honduras

Dávila: Dávila sent one Martín de Villarubia to capture native men to take messages to Ulúa. One of those captured he kept hostage, while others sent for this hostage's father, a lord, to take the messages and return in thirty days. The period passed, and he did not return. Dávila sent for the father and, torturing him and others, learned that he had kept the letter in his house. He then decided to keep the father hostage and send the son with the letter with thirty days to return. The time passed, and he went to the territory of the father and son, where he learned that the son had never left with the message. At this point he learned that all of the Mayas planned to attack the Spanish party at Villa Real.

Attacks on Villa Real Begin

Dávila: Dávila returned to Villa Real and after several days sent Francisco Vázquez for some maize. Two hundred natives arrived in nineteen canoes at their port, but these left without incident.

When Villarubia went out to meet the returning Vázquez, two of his party were killed by attacking Indians who shot at them with arrows at the entrance to the port. They all waited in the villa for a further attack that did not come.

Comment: Martín de Villarubia and Francisco Vázquez served as *alcaldes* of the new villa under Dávila. His *regidores* were Cristóbal Cisneros, Francisco de Montejo (presumably the adelantado's nephew), Blas Maldonado, and Alonso de Arévalo.

Decision to Abandon Villa Real

Dávila: With the entire land in rebellion, only five of the original thirteen horses still alive, and five of the original forty Spaniards dead, they decided to leave Villa Real.

Luján: The Spaniards decided to leave the area. They lashed thirty-two canoes together in pairs and outfitted them with sails. They removed the crosses from the town, dismantled the church, and set out for Honduras in the canoes rowed by Indian prisoners in irons. They were followed by enemy Indians for the first day.

Comment: The church must have been a simple, thatched structure, as it was so quickly dismantled. The tradition of erecting crosses in New World native and Spanish towns began with the first landings of explorers. In about 1562 the first Franciscan bishop, Francisco de Toral, codified a number of ecclesiastical procedures, including the rule that missionaries were to set up "crosses at the entrances and exits of the towns and at the entrances of the churches and patios."¹⁵ This pattern, which tended to result in crosses being situated in each of the four cardinal directions at both the edge of the town and the boundary of the plaza, was probably also applied at Dávila's settlement at Villa Real. The pattern still applies to many contemporary Maya towns and villages in Yucatán and Quintana Roo.

The Journey Along the Coast

Dávila: They found no towns anywhere along the coast toward Honduras, as all the towns were on high ground two or three days' journey up the rivers. They went to some of these and took supplies from them, sometimes by force.

Luján: Along the way they would untie some of the canoes, go up the rivers, attack towns along the banks, and take Indians and supplies from them. On one occasion six canoes were lost in water swells; this trip was six or seven leagues up and back. They met canoes of traders carrying cloth and other merchandise from Yucatán, which the Indians traded for cacao in Ulúa. The Spaniards forced these traders to give up their canoes in exchange for their own poorer ones. The trip from Chetumal to Puerto Caballos took seven months.

Comment: Both sources agree that they found no towns along the coast south of Chetumal but that the first towns were a considerable distance upstream. Therefore, the known coastal colonial towns of the sixteenth and seventeenth century (e.g., Zacatan and Manan, discussed in later chapters), must have been reduction communities established by the Spanish. The pattern of north-south exchange of cotton cloth for cacao continued well into the colonial period and was part of the sixteenth-century economic base of Bacalar itself. Bacalar's cacao production must have offset later declines in the importation of Honduran cacao into Yucatán.

The Chetumal and Uaymil Provinces in Perspective

These two remarkable accounts appear to indicate that Chetumal and Uaymil were small territorial units. From them we can gather that Chetumal might have been restricted to a stretch of coast north of the Río Hondo, while Uaymil controlled Lake Bacalar from Yumpeten north to Mazanahau on the Río Hondo and inland to a boundary only four leagues northwest of Lake Xoca. Even though Dávila's party apparently did not encounter populations further south during his difficult stay at Villa Real, however, reports from the 1540s, discussed below, indicate that Chetumal's territory may well have extended south to incorporate the areas around the lower New River as well as Corozal Bay.

Dávila's various agreements with the nobles of Uaymil indicate an absence of fully centralized leadership under a single *halach uinic* (territorial ruler), although Bacalar seems to have been the central town of the province. Chetumal's rulers apparently exacted tribute payments from traders at Bacalar.

The *halach uinic* of Chetumal may have been a man of some power, if in fact he did command authority over the leaders of Bacalar as indicated by Dávila. Chetumal may have been in such a position due to its commanding position as the controller of coastal trade entering Lake Bacalar; its possible location around Ichpaatun on the western shore of Chetumal Bay (discussed in the Appendix) would have ensured its ability to monitor movement up the Río Hondo as well as up the northern waterway to the lake. It is certainly possible that we can explain this centrality, as did Thompson, by appealing to the influence of foreign Chontal invaders from Acalan.¹⁶ But whereas the quotation introducing this chapter does suggest that Chontal-speakers from the Acalan province did impose tribute on Chetumal in precontact times, it may not justify drawing the conclusion that foreign domination amounted to fully centralized Chontal colonization.

Uaymil appears to have been a densely populated region with sizable towns at a distance of two to four leagues (about eight to sixteen km) apart. Alliances between towns were strong, and the hostilities against the Spanish seem to have been part of a concerted regional effort. Trade overland through the Cochuah province, just inland from Lake Xoca, connected Lake Bacalar and the coast with northern points on the peninsula. Honey, beeswax, and cacao would have been the primary trade items, exchanged for cotton cloth from the north—just as a wider trade in these items passed along the coast to points as far south as Honduras. Bacalar must have been a major shipping point, as it produced and provided canoes for the entire region.

Whether the strong inter-provincial alliance encountered by Dávila was characteristic of the precontact period or a phenomenon generated by external attack we will never know. The numerous fortifications encountered by the Spaniards were apparently constructed after their first passage through the area, but this strategy of warfare was obviously well established, as we saw in Montejo's first encounter with Chetumal.

The later decision by Melchor Pacheco to establish the villa of Salamanca de Bacalar at the old town of Bacalar was clearly motivated by the central position of that town between the Chetumal and Uaymil provinces and by the town's position in inter-regional trade routes. The establishment of Tamalcab as a mission town along the coast, probably near the old site of Chetumal, would have likewise followed the earlier pattern of coastal control over the two entrances to Lake Bacalar.

THE 1544 CONQUEST AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SALAMANCA DE BACALAR

The Conquest

Following Dávila's ill-fated efforts to establish a villa on Corozal Bay, Uaymil and Chetumal were left to their own devices until late 1543 or 1544, when Gaspar Pacheco and his son, Melchor, began the decisive conquest of the area. Permission had been granted to these men to pursue the enterprise by the adelantado Francisco de Montejo on 3 January 1543. Montejo, following the pattern established with Alonso Dávila, gave Gaspar the title *capitán general y teniente de gobernador* (Captain General and Lieutenant Governor). Melchor received the title of *maestre de campo* (chief militia officer).¹⁷ With the permission of the cabildo of Mérida, Gaspar, Melchor, and Alonso López Zarco then sailed to Mexico to purchase supplies and, presumably, to recruit Spanish soldiers.¹⁸ They were to "pacify" the provinces of Uaymil, Chetumal, and Dzuluinicob (Zuluiniques in original), establish and populate a villa of Spaniards, and, in the usual fashion, distribute the Indians in encomienda among the participating conquerors.¹⁹

The encomienda, of course, was the customary royal reward to conquerors and other early Spanish settlers, and the Pachecos and their partners and troops stood to gain considerable income in tribute as a result of the conquest of these territories. Once the native populations of the southern provinces had been distributed among the Spaniards and counted, they would be required to pay specified amounts (for which we have no record) to their designated encomendero; in these regions that amount would have been in cacao as well as in the pieces of woven

cotton known as *mantas*. In return, the encomenderos were expected to maintain houses and families in the nearest villa, to oversee the religious conversion of the Indians, and to be on call in case of military emergencies. It is questionable, however, in the case of the Pacheco expedition, that the Pachecos themselves had any long-term interest in maintaining a presence at the new villa of Salamanca de Bacalar. Rather, their interest appears primarily to have been in conquest for conquest's sake, for the result of their campaign was the destruction of much of the resource base from which they might have received tribute.

When Gaspar Pacheco became ill upon the arrival of his troops in Uaymil, his son, Melchor, assumed the leadership of the campaign, with Gaspar's nephew, Alonso, serving as his second-in-command.²⁰ This has come to be known as one of the most ruthless of all Spanish conquest efforts under Montejo's jurisdiction, a judgment based in part on the indictment of Fray Lorenzo de Bienvenida, who wrote in 1548 to the crown as follows:

Nero was not more cruel than [Alonso Pacheco]. He passed forward and reached a province called Chetumal, which was at peace. Even though the natives did not make war, he robbed the province and consumed the foodstuffs of the natives, who fled into the bush in fear of the Spaniards, since as soon as [this captain] captured any of them, he set the dogs on them. And the Indians fled from all this and did not sow their crops, and all died of hunger. I say all, because there were pueblos of five hundred and one thousand houses, and now one which has one hundred is large. The province was also rich in cacao. This captain, with his own hands committed outrages: he killed many with the garrote, saying, "This is a good rod with which to punish these people," and, after he had killed them, he said, "Oh how well I finished them off." Tying them to stakes, he cut the breasts off many women, and hands, noses, and ears off the men, and he tied squashes to the feet of women and threw them in the lakes to drown merely to amuse himself. He committed other great cruelties which I shall not mention for lack of space.²¹

Bienvenida, one of the earliest Franciscans to work in Yucatan, had established his first mission in Bacalar about 1546 on his way from Santiago de Guatemala to Mérida.²² He may have stayed there for about a year and must have had a firm basis upon which to make such accusations before even arriving at his destination in northern Yucatan. There is therefore every reason to accept his horrifying description of the Pa-

checos' behavior. Bishop Diego de Landa, hardly known for his own gentle treatment of the Maya, offered a similar description some years later:

The Indians of the provinces of Cochua and Chetumal revolted, the Spaniards pacified them in such a way, that these provinces which were formerly the thickest settled and the most populous, remained the most desolate of all the country; committing upon them unheard-of cruelties, cutting off noses, arms and legs, and the breasts of women; throwing them into deep lagoons with gourds tied to their feet; stabbing the little children because they did not walk as fast as their mothers; and if those whom they drove along, chained together around the neck, fell sick or did not move along as fast as the others they cut off their heads between the others, so as not to stop and untie them. With like inhuman treatment as this did they drag along in their train for their service a large number of male and female captives. And it is said the Don Francisco de Montejo did not commit any of these barbarities nor was he present at them. On the contrary they seemed very evil to him, but he could do nothing more.²³

It is unfortunate that we have no other descriptions of the Pachecos' conquest of this region, which was apparently carried out in vengeance for the Mayas' treatment of Dávila's party twelve years earlier. Nor is it known exactly when the villa at the site of Bacalar (Bakhalal in the original documents) was formally established, although this must have been at the end of 1544.²⁴ From much later documents, however, we can at least begin to sketch out the extent of the territory that they sought to conquer.

For many years it has been supposed that the territory conquered by the Pachecos was restricted to the Chetumal and Uaymil provinces.²⁵ However, Landa, quoted above, extended the range of their activities into the Cochua province. Recently identified documentation indicates that their conquest reached further south as well, into the province of Dzuluinicob, a name also applied to the New River throughout the seventeenth century.²⁶

Montejo had charged the Pachecos with the conquest of a territory that was to extend as far south as the Golfo Dulce (Lake Izabal in Verapaz).²⁷ López de Cogolludo wrote that Salamanca de Bacalar "has a seaport on the Honduras coast and borders with the Indians of Verapaz, the Itzas, and Chinamitas and others . . . as yet unconquered."²⁸ The territory thus delineated would roughly incorporate that of modern Be-

lize. As we shall see in the following section, the Pacheco conquest must have reached at least as far as Tipu in western Belize.

The Founding of Salamanca de Bacalar

The new villa of Salamanca de Bacalar comprised the two Pacheco cousins and a handful of their Spanish followers. In 1547 Alonso and Melchor Pacheco were listed as *alcaldes*, and there were three *regidores*: Pedro de Avila, Alonso Hernández, and Juan Farfán. Juan Pérez de Castañeda was the public scribe (*escribano público*).²⁹ Alonso Pacheco and the *regidores* may have been the men who received the four *encomiendas* that were next in size to that received by Melchor himself, which was said to be larger than all four of these combined.

Melchor's grant consisted of the *cabecera* of Kitun (Quitun), "with its *pueblos* and *sujetos* [i.e., outlying population]"; the town and *cabecera* Taxamas and its *sujeto*; half of the towns of Xoca and Bacalar "with all subject to them"; and the town and *cabecera* of Cante.³⁰ Of Cante and Kitun we know nothing more, except that "Quehtun" was one of the towns on a 1582 list of Bacalar province towns.³¹ Taxamas may have been the Tamalcab of later years, and Xoca, located on Lake Xoca a short distance north of Lake Bacalar, may, as suggested earlier, have been the Chable visited in the Uaymil province by Dávila and his party. The names of Mazanahau, Chable, and Chetumal, however, are missing from the early post-conquest record. Of the other *encomiendas* established in 1544, only Chanlacan, which was probably in Belize, can be identified with virtual certainty (see Appendix). Tipu may also have been among the original *encomiendas*, as we shall also see later.

Some of the first *encomiendas* established by Pacheco and his fellow conquerors were soon lost from physical contact or abandoned by the congregated populations. The conquered and congregated towns of this early period of Bacalar's history were difficult to control for two reasons. First, those that were far away, such as Tipu, were impossible to monitor or keep under guard, and they were much too far away to visit regularly. Second, those that were close to Bacalar were undoubtedly composed not only of local populations but also of members of distant communities who had been brought as virtual prisoners to swell the ranks of the congregated *pueblos*; these individuals were the most likely to run away at the first opportunity. Pacheco must have seen his human sources of income melt away before his eyes as they slipped into the forest, perhaps even encouraged from the sidelines by his moral critic Fray Lorenzo de Bienvenida. It is also likely that he saw his Spanish supporters begin to desert him as they likewise saw their native clients escape to distant

locations and realized that the Bacalar province would never provide a secure income.

The reassignment of Pacheco's encomienda to the crown in 1553 must have been a carefully calculated, politically manipulated deal, out of which, in return, he would have enjoyed a far more dependable tributary population in just half of Hocaba than he had had in these several Bacalar towns. In addition, his health and that of his family was undoubtedly safer in the drier northwestern portion of the peninsula. In the next chapter we shall explore the fate and qualities of those who succeeded him and his cousin Alonso in control over Salamanca de Bacalar.

Population loss. The reduction in the population of these areas from 1531 to the later decades of the sixteenth century was dramatic. The population in 1531 cannot be estimated, although Luján's account claims that the Cochua, Uaymil, and Chetumal provinces were densely populated with towns of several thousand persons; both Dávila and Luján report many towns relatively close to one another. Bienvenida claimed that there had been towns of 500 to 1,000 houses but that by the time he wrote in 1548, a town of 100 houses would have been large. In 1551 the eight *vecinos* living in the villa were said to be poor because the Indians were so few in number.³² By 1582 the total estimated tributaries for the province of Salamanca de Bacalar was merely 250, indicating in that year a total population, based on a 3.425 conversion factor, of only about 856 Mayas (see Chapter 4).³³

Even granting the extent of flight into unconquered territories that must have taken place following the 1544 conquest, the actual population loss must have been great. Some of this additional decline would have been due to loss of life in warfare with the Spanish, as Bienvenida and Landa argued. Much, however, must have been due to diseases introduced by the Spanish into this largely uncontacted region. Unlike other parts of Yucatan, original population levels were never recovered in later years, for which the later introduction of malaria might well have been a major contributing factor.

CHANLACAN AND THE BEGINNINGS OF COLONIAL REBELLION

In November 1546, only two years after the conquest of Uaymil, Chetumal, and Dzuluinicob, the Mayas of the eastern provinces of Yucatan broke out in open anti-Spanish rebellion.³⁴ The conflict was focused upon the villa of Valladolid, also established in 1544, on the site of the

Maya town of Saci. Support for the rebellion was apparently concentrated in the Maya priestly leadership of most of the eastern provinces from Chikinchel, Tazes, Cupul, and Sotuta in the north through Cochua, Uaymil, and Chetumal in the south. The goal of the rebellion was clearly to remove all Spanish influence from the region, although after initial loss of European lives Spanish control was gradually restored.

In the south the outbreak was centered at the town of Chanlacan. At this town, according to contemporary sources at Bacalar, "resided the force of the said province [of Chetumal]," strongly suggesting that the leaders of Chetumal had reestablished the provincial capital there following Dávila's departure a decade earlier.³⁵ The cabildo of the small Spanish community at Salamanca de Bacalar sent news in early 1547 that the inhabitants of Chanlacan had killed their encomendero, Martín Rodríguez, known as El Piloto. Francisco de Montejo the Nephew sent Juan de Aguilar to Bacalar to pacify the rebel town. There he received a commission and instructions from the cabildo, which had earlier attempted unsuccessfully to apprehend the murderers by sending a party of Mayas from Lamanai to Chanlacan.³⁶

With these powers in hand Aguilar prepared his party and went with canoes by water, lakes, and rivers until reaching the said town of Chanlacan, which is settled upon the water [*poblado en el agua*]. And by means of his fine diligence [resulting in] little harm to the natives, and with the gifts and good treatment that he gave them, and because he gave the cacique his wife who had been in prison at the time as she had been taken in other entradas, he reduced them pacified to the service of his majesty. And to this day they are quiet and pay their tributes peacefully to their encomenderos, without making trouble.³⁷

Chanlacan appears to have been among those towns conquered and assigned in encomienda in 1544; perhaps the cacique of Chanlacan's wife had been taken to Bacalar at that time. Chanlacan's principal importance was its status as the major surviving headquarters of the Chetumal province following either the departure of Dávila or the 1544 Pacheco conquest.

The probable location of Chanlacan on or near Progreso Lagoon in northern Belize will be discussed in Chapter 4. Here I wish simply to emphasize that the 1547 rebellion at Chanlacan was more than an isolated, localized response to newly established colonial control. It was, rather, a continuation of the efforts of the leaders of the Chetumal province to expel the Spanish presence first threatened by Montejo in 1528,

by Dávila in 1531, and finally by the brutal conquest of 1544. The headquarters of this leadership had shifted in twenty years from the town of Chetumal to Chequitaquil and, finally, to Chanlacan. In witnessing these movements we find ample evidence for the further extension of the Chetumal province during this early period from Lake Bacalar in the north to at least the lower reaches of the New River and perhaps as far south as New River Lagoon. We also see signs of the efforts of this leadership to retain control over the entire province, even against the heavy odds of Spanish arms.

We shall see that the 1567–1568 rebellion that Juan Garzón was sent to quell also involved the entire Chetumal province. By then, however, in addition to claims of direct Maya threats on Spaniards there was also a pattern of Maya flight to even more remote regions to the south. This flight was apparently fostered by leaders of both the Chetumal and Dzuluinicob provinces, and there are signs of a new anti-Spanish Maya alliance of these two provinces with its headquarters at Tipu.

REBELLION AND RECONQUEST, 1568–1569

We learn more about the further reaches of this territory only in retrospect, from reports of two ambitious entradas pursued by Juan de Garzón from Salamanca de Bacalar during 1568.³⁸ Garzón had been serving in Bacalar since October 1567 as lieutenant governor, with the assigned task of carrying out a *residencia* of the cabildo of the villa and a general visita of the rural areas. This was not his first such visit, as he had also been in Bacalar as early as 1547, when he signed documents pertaining to Juan de Aguilar's entrada to Chanlacan.³⁹ The events surrounding the entradas that he led during 1568 indicate not only widespread rebellion but also the fact that some of these uprisings took place in previously conquered regions far from Bacalar itself. They indicate, that is, that the Pacheco conquest had been far more extensive than previously imagined.

In 1568, according to Garzón's petition, a

large quantity of Indians had rebelled and were going about in an unruly and excited state, committing idolatry and inflicting much damage adjacent to Nueva Salamanca . . . and placing the Spaniards and other persons who live there in much risk and danger, because they carried away the servants, killed those whom they could, burned the houses, robbed the farms, and other things.

According to some witnesses, Mayas were actually coming to the towns near Bacalar, including the *barrio* of San Juan Extramuros, and carrying off the *indios de servicio*. The attacking parties comprised not only unconquered or distant Mayas but also baptized runaways from the villa itself. A careful reading of witnesses' reports suggests that not all of the "peaceful" Mayas were kidnapped, but rather that they ran away under the protection of the rebels.

The Bacalareños apparently feared less for their lives than for the loss of tribute payers and *indios de servicio* caused by these events. They also claimed, not without justification, that the trade route to the interior was about to be cut off. Witnesses to the event claimed that Bacalar was the *fortaleza* of Yucatán, the last frontier before the wild Indian interior, and that its loss would cut off the principal interior routes to Puerto Caballos and Guatemala. Responding to the opportunity to make a name for himself and hoping for a future reward, Garzón left Bacalar for Mérida to raise money, collect supplies, and recruit Spanish and Maya troops to crush the resistance. The governor gave him no financial support, but the cabildo of Mérida, seeing that Garzón was paying the entire cost of the mission himself, gave permission for the trip and the effort to bring the rebel Indians under Spanish control. We do not know how large a party Garzón took to Bacalar, but subsequent events suggest that this was an undertaking of major proportions, reinforced by native troops and food supplies from various northern towns.⁴⁰

The First Entrada

After arriving back at Bacalar on Palm Sunday of 1568, Garzón set out toward the west on his first of the entradas, carrying his flag before his troops and heading off on foot, without horses. He was accompanied by most of the Spanish vecinos of Bacalar, one Franciscan missionary,⁴¹ and a "quantity" of friendly Indians from the area. He later claimed to have gone eighty or ninety leagues into the interior, searching out and destroying rebel towns and villages, leaving not a house standing. His troops also destroyed many *cues*, or temples, broke many "idols," and burned "many books of figures from their ancient days."

On this entrada Garzón's party travelled for fifteen days before nearing the "enemy" Mayas, who were located in a hilly region. Using spies and runners who travelled ahead of his party, he managed to capture a watchman who took them near the first town, which they took by surprise by moonlight. The "friendly" Mayas with him remained loyal at this time and throughout the entrada. They then followed another road for three days, along which the Mayas had placed a series of "triumphal

arches" through which, the Spaniards learned, had earlier been carried an "idol" in procession, destined for placement in a temple further along the road.

Eventually they found this temple in a town where they captured a number of men and women. The "idol" in question was positioned on a high altar "with its adornment and hanging and candlesticks, and along the walls filled with a large number of small idols. There was also the vestment of the *chilan* whom they had in that place, just as we Christians have bishops, and their attendants." Garzón destroyed the altar, the "idols," and the "church." They discovered other temples in which Garzón claimed that human sacrifice was practiced, and in these they burned many books "*de sus antigüedades*" and "so many idols that they couldn't easily be counted." Finally, they captured the *chilan* himself, "who deceived all of them into believing that he spoke with the devil. This *chilan* had been reared with friars; he knew how to speak Spanish." They later sent this native priest to Mérida to be dealt with by the bishop; his fate is not known. The rest of the *entrada* was spent scouring the *sierra*, capturing men and women, and burning towns behind them. They brought the captives, whose numbers are not recorded, back to Bacalar, where they were baptized and placed among the "peaceful" Indians of the immediate area.

The claimed distance of eighty or ninety leagues covered on this *entrada* would have taken Garzón's party well into what was later called Cehach territory, north of Lake Peten Itza. In fact, Garzón claimed that they reached as far as an extension of the Acalan province, where he established a crown pueblo. In attaining such a distance from Bacalar, we can surmise that the major thrust of this *entrada* was in fact not to serve the vecinos of Bacalar but rather to put a stop to forces of flight and resistance in the region south of the Sierra.

The Second Entrada

After sitting out part of the rainy season in Bacalar, Garzón and his party headed southward for sixty leagues to Tipu, where they also found and destroyed "many idolatries," throwing *sacrificadores* (possibly censers) to the ground and burning "idols." One witness claimed that Tipu had been "in risk," implying that it was already an established colonial town. Garzón noted that he carried out a visita of the territory, suggesting that he applied fines to the existing Maya cabildos.

Using Tipu as a base of operations, the Spaniards searched the countryside as far as fifteen days away, capturing all of those they could find until "there was no notice of more people." Just as on the first entrada,

they discovered and burned native books. On this further push southward, which Garzón referred to as his third entrada, they traveled across the Maya mountains and even captured runaways from Verapaz who had been under the charge of the Dominicans there. Others of these, he learned, had run back to Lake Izabal (Golfo Dulce) in fear of being captured by Garzón's troops. In all, it was said that the Spaniards had covered 100 leagues of territory, a distance that would have taken them deep into Manche Chol territory in southern Belize.

On this entrada they "rescued" the inhabitants of an encomienda town which the enemy Mayas had earlier captured and taken with them (or who, according to one witness, had run away with the rebels). This unnamed town was part of the encomienda of Chanlacan, which, along with Yumpeten, belonged to Diego de Riveros.⁴² In his zeal, Garzón wanted to push even further ahead into Guatemala, but his men, exhausted from surviving on a diet of fruit and monkeys, insisted "in the name of the king" that they return to Bacalar with their captives, who were placed in "peaceful territory."

Although the route of this entrada was not specified, we know that the party returned to Bacalar through Lamanai in December 1568.⁴³ Therefore, they must have gone and come via the New River on the same route followed by Fray Bartolomé de Fuensalida and Fray Juan de Orbita in 1618.

Later Charges Against Juan Garzón

During the 1571 residencia investigations against Governor Luis Céspedes de Oviedo, under whom Garzón had served as lieutenant governor in Bacalar, one Rodrigo de Escalona presented charges that claimed, among other things, that Garzón had mistreated the Indians on the entradas, profiting from the sale of some of them as slaves.⁴⁴ In his defense Garzón claimed—with remarkable self-righteousness and exaggeration—that his party did not make war but rather went peacefully; that none of them died; that those they collected were treated well and fed; and that they carried no arms with them. Furthermore, he said that he had placed the captives under the care of the priests with orders that they be treated well and not charged tribute. As for slavery, he had never even thought of such an idea.

Garzón's witnesses, including Bacalareños who had accompanied him on both entradas, came to his full defense. One of the non-Bacalareño witnesses was Francisco Palomino, who later came to be known as an ardent defender of Indian rights in his capacity as the provincial *defensor de naturales* but who had accompanied Garzón as his *maestre de campo*.⁴⁵

He estimated that Garzón had spent more than 1,000 pesos equipping and feeding his party and the Indian captives. Three months later Garzón was exonerated of all charges.

The 1568 entradas in perspective. The accounts of these entradas provide not only factual insight but also room for informed speculation about the wider circumstances of the hinterland of the Bacalar province twenty-four years after the establishment of the villa. They leave no doubt that Tipu, located far up a tributary of the Belize River, was already established as an encomienda town in 1568, all but confirming that the Pacheco conquest had reached at least as far as Tipu and its environs. This must have been the further extension of the Zuluiniques or Dzuluinicob province of which Pacheco spoke in later years—a province approached through and possibly incorporating the lands along all but the lowermost New River. Tipu in 1568 was being reconquered, as it was a town “in risk” of being lost completely to Spanish control.

We also learn from these circumstances of a pattern of Maya activity that was to appear again and again during the century to follow. In this pattern there would be widespread signs of religious revitalization or millenarianism under the control of native priests who stimulated a policy of widespread resistance against Spanish control. The form of this resistance, characteristically, included the recruitment of Christianized encomienda Mayas to run away from their towns and join the resistant frontier native polities. Their religious leaders were sometimes elites who had been trained in the Franciscan monasteries and who brought to their followers newly syncretized, holistic amalgamations of Maya and Christian religious ritual and belief. In its broader outlines, the frontier Maya circumstances of 1568 were almost identical to those of 1638, but by the latter date there was no longer any external support for pursuing entradas to destroy the resistance and return the runaways to their encomiendas.

Maya hieroglyphic books were everywhere in evidence on the Maya frontier of 1568. Tragically, they were destroyed with the apparent blessing of the Franciscans who accompanied the entradas in the continuation of a policy that had reached its earlier climax in northern parts of Yucatan in 1562 under Bishop Fray Diego de Landa. There was possibly a deeper significance in the presence of these books in conjunction with signs of religious revitalization and a millenarian zeal that was sufficiently effective to convince numerous Christianized Mayas to abandon their homes. The year 1568 or 1569 was the midpoint of Katun 9 Ahau, a reasonable time at which to prepare for an event of even greater scope that would occur at the opening of Katun 7 Ahau in 1579. Religious fer-

vor was apparently widespread enough at this time—all the way from Tipu to as far west as the Cehach area, which Garzón may have reached on his first entrada—to suggest a series of interlocking frontier movements in preparation for a much larger future event. That such an event never occurred was ensured by the scope and effectiveness of Garzón's double-edged search-and-destroy missions.

Garzón's entradas also give us some perspective into the strategies and techniques of sixteenth-century Spanish conquest and reconquest activities. Although less violent and repressive than the Pacheco conquest, Garzón's activities could hardly have been as "peaceful" as he suggested. To the Spanish, the Other of the frontier was there to be "brought back" to the Spanish fold, no matter how extreme the means. The Indians were regarded as weak but recalcitrant backsliders, tempted by false prophets, idolatry, and human sacrifice. Only by the total destruction of their habitations and the symbols of their non-Christianity (however syncretic their actual beliefs might have been) could they be returned to civilization. Garzón regarded his techniques as gentle, as well they may have been in comparison with those of his predecessors.

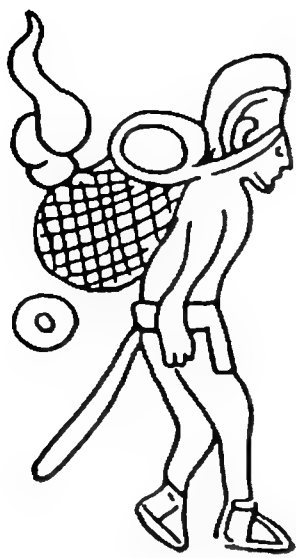
CONCLUSIONS

Chetumal, Uaymil, and Dzuluinicob were the farthest native frontiers of a colonial frontier. Hardly a colonial dependency in their earliest years, these remote and little understood provinces were conquered and "pacified" not for the tribute income that they might produce but rather in the interests of pacifying the backyard of the nascent colony of Yucatan. From the earliest years of colonial exploration in the region, it became obvious that its significance lay not in any initial hopes for gold and wealth but in its potential for harboring indigenous troublemakers.

The new villa of Salamanca de Bacalar served from its very beginnings as a watchdog for Maya runaways from the north, as a monitor of Maya efforts to preserve their culture and native religion, and as a signal point from which potential rebellion might be communicated to the colonial government at Mérida. So vast was the area under the villa's responsibility that its Spanish inhabitants had little hope of accomplishing such tasks without financial support and military intervention from Yucatan. Most of Bacalar's original inhabitants soon abandoned the town for greener pastures, leaving this tiny inland port to new settlers who were brave and foolhardy enough to be willing to live in constant danger in the hope of earning a modest monetary reward from local tribute and coastal trade and contraband.

From its beginnings, then, the Bacalar province—the Spanish territory that encompassed these three native provinces and their immediate neighbors—comprised a tiny, often corrupt, and virtually disenfranchised Spanish population in the midst of a great green sea of widely scattered, rebellious, and nativistic Mayas. We now turn to the Spanish community that attempted to govern this recalcitrant native region.

3: SALAMANCA DE BACALAR



That villa is inhabited by the most miserable people in all the Indies, in a region so remote and poor that there is scarcely anyone who knows how to read and write, and where a mulatto, the son of an alcalde, was alcalde ordinario. And it is lucky that there is anyone who wants to inhabit that villa.¹

THE SPANISH FRONTIER

The reality of this dual frontier—simultaneously a remote backwater of Spanish colonialism and an obscured, semihidden world of native resistance—must be described first of all in terms of the Spanish individuals and institutions that made the Province of Salamanca de Bacalar a place in Spanish consciousness. We must therefore explore the community of colonizers that controlled and administered this province from the time of the establishment of the villa by Melchor and Alonso Pacheco in 1544 through its abandonment during the early 1650s and its following period of exile at the towns of Pacha and Chunchuhub to the north of the old villa. This final phase of the villa's history, which terminated in the events that led to the conquest of Tah Itza in 1697, will be treated in more detail in Chapter 8.

Chapter 4, in contrast, will examine the communities of Mayas that were forced to adapt to the colonial conditions imposed by the presence of Bacalar and its Spanish community. I have chosen for structural purposes to treat the colonial and native communities as contrasting entities, although to do so is clearly to risk the danger of deemphasizing their mutual and dynamic dependence in a world defined by a wide variety of interactional situations, patterns of continuing foreign-introduced domination, and evidences of marked changes in such relationships over the century and a half under discussion. These interactions will emerge throughout subsequent parts of the text, but for now such hard-and-fast structural contrasts serve as a point of departure from which processes of interaction and change may better be described and evaluated.

Structural Transformations

The nature of history as process, as opposed to history as structure, is a familiar issue in much recent literature;² the argument in this and subsequent chapters underscores a central agreement on this issue that appears to be emerging among scholars. That is, that while historical processes may well have transformed structures of domination over the long run, these processes were partly hidden from the consciousness of those who reported them and must subsequently be reconstructed from hindsight. Their partial obscurity lies in the facts that even the most stubbornly reproduced structures "of the long run" have symbolic as well as material manifestations and that under certain circumstances these may combine to transform present realities in the most profound fashion. Such transformations may not be recognized as such by contemporary observers, especially when those who write about them stand to lose from admitting that ideal expectations are no longer being achieved.

The most fundamental structures in question—a native orientation toward the fulfillment of recurrent millennial prophecy on the one hand and a colonial orientation toward progressive spiritual and physical conquest of native dependents on the other—were introduced in Chapter 1. Because these structures are manifested not in static examples of positional contrast but rather in the working out of goal-oriented strategies of interaction, they require time-oriented "story telling" to bring them clearly into our understanding. This chapter and the next are merely prefatory to the requirement that the story be told, that the positional contrasts be identified. Those who await the story are encouraged to exercise patience, for there is much of interest in discovering the actors in the drama and the persistent, repetitive quality of their juxtaposition.

Sources for the Spanish Community

The documentation for the Spanish community is in some respects quite remarkable, regardless of the "informant bias" that must be addressed. Certain sources stand out as particularly important. It would have been nearly impossible, for instance, to write this chapter had I not found, quite by accident, a remarkable document in the Archivo General de Indias innocuously entitled "Residencia de Bacalar," tucked into one *legajo* of the massive residencia of governor Luis Céspedes de Oviedo.³ This lengthy document, which exposes through a series of sworn testimonies the interrelationships among members of the small villa of Salamanca de Bacalar between 1567 and 1571, is much more detailed than most such investigations of wrongdoings committed by local authorities.

In addition, I have relied heavily on an important document from the

same period entitled "Probanza en nombre de la villa de Salamanca de Bacalar," an unusual request by a villa's leaders for a royal grant (*merced*) due to the town's poverty and its recent calamitous experiences.⁴ In addition to these substantial sources, I have found particularly useful, first of all, a series of *probanzas* (records of personal merits and services) of individuals associated with events in Bacalar through the mid-seventeenth century, most of which were submitted as retrospective documentation in support of later encomienda oppositions. Second, I utilize information on financial and cabildo matters from the royal accounts from Yucatán for the early seventeenth century. Finally, we are fortunate to have several records of encomienda oppositions and confirmations for the Bacalar province.

Such sources of information have provided a wide variety of remarkable ethnographic details. We find extensive genealogical information concerning members of the Spanish community from the initial conquest until the collapse of Bacalar in the late seventeenth century. This information supplements detailed information on the history of the membership of the Bacalar cabildo and of the larger community. So detailed is much of this material that many individuals become familiar characters as we attempt to trace the internal stratification and social relationships of community members. It is also possible to derive from the record certain aspects of colonial Spanish frontier culture, not only as an "internal" phenomenon but also as the culture through which colonial domination was expressed. Less satisfactory, but suggestive nonetheless, is a body of significant information on the colonial political economy as this was expressed in Spanish domination of the Maya.

Salamanca de Bacalar: An Initial Sketch

One cannot help but be struck by Salamanca de Bacalar's extreme poverty and backwardness in contrast to the other villas of Campeche and Valladolid. Not only was material wealth lacking, but the community also lacked resources of literacy and education beyond a handful of leaders and scribes. Health was poor, and people died young. This was a community dependent on the one hand upon distant power holders for patronage and on the other upon recalcitrant and rebellious native subjects who made possible what was considered a minimally acceptable European standard of living.

The town of Salamanca de Bacalar had an incestuous, ingrown quality that even those who have studied contemporary small rural peasant communities might find difficult to comprehend. Contrary to its status as a villa, Bacalar was little more than a hamlet in size, even including

the Indian *naborías*, and its members were confined for much of the time to a virtual state of "village arrest" due to the difficulties and dangers of travel. Life in this lakeside hothouse was characterized by a preoccupation with petty daily conflicts between community members, leading to frequent quarrels and even injury. If the sources are an accurate guide, there was little knowledge or concern about the wider world or even about the Indian communities under the members' control. This lack of understanding of both the centers of colonial activity and the periphery of Maya society reinforced a parochialism that exacerbated native discontent and excited official horror in Mérida over the ineptness and corruption of the local administration.

Although there is remarkable continuity of family controls at the villa for many decades running, there are a few striking episodes in its history in which transformations involving both structures and personnel occurred. The most important of these took place during the first decade of the seventeenth century and resulted in a shift of the basis of local colonial power and real authority from the villa itself to a family of absentee encomenderos who wielded considerable cabildo influence in Valladolid. With this shift came a more rigorous effort to control the Maya population of the Bacalar province through renewed policies of congregación that had apparently been given up decades earlier. Shortly thereafter the threat of foreign intrusion into the province by pirates and logwood cutters led to an increasingly defensive posture. The combination of these changes resulted in a policy of increasingly onerous economic demands on the Maya population, apparently reflecting trends elsewhere in the peninsula. There is no doubt that such intensification of exploitation contributed to the outbreak of native resistance in 1638.

To a modern observer the people of Salamanca de Bacalar may appear to have lacked even the most basic organizational and managerial vision. It is understandably difficult to comprehend how a group of people so close to their native subjects—living next to them, speaking their language, engaging in the most intimate relationships with them—could have ignored the warning signals that they must have received almost daily, continuing to behave as though their subjects would always roll over in obedience to their masters. Yet this perception may be but another case of the inability of Self to comprehend Other, this time of our own contemporary inability to account for what appears to be irrational behavior not in the native but rather in the dominant society. We must therefore constantly remind ourselves of the inadequacy of our data as genuinely representative of Spanish thought and behavior. Fur-

ther, we must remain aware of the remarkably difficult circumstances to which this small band of poor rural Spaniards had to adapt.

ESTABLISHMENT, REPRODUCTION, AND TRANSFORMATION IN BACALAR SOCIETY

The First Encomiendas and Cabildo

The circumstances of Bacalar's creation in 1544 were hardly promising. The new town was isolated in the extreme from the other centers of Spanish control, and it is doubtful that its first principal vecinos, Melchor and Alonso Pacheco, had serious intentions from the outset to remain in this outpost location as permanent residents. The notorious cruelty of the conquest of the native provinces that the new province was to control—Uaymil, Chetumal, and Dzuluinicob—was such that its native subjects were hardly likely to be cooperative with their new foreign lords. From the beginning it was apparent that the region was to be a rebellious one, its native inhabitants fanning the fires not only of local noncooperation but also of the increasing movement of fugitives who ran away from the encomiendas in the northern sectors of the peninsula.

Melchor Pacheco was the strong man not only of the conquest of this province but also of the government of the early community's cabildo. He had arrived in Yucatan about 1538 with his parents Gaspar Pacheco and María de Vargas of the Spanish villa of Alcázar. He received in encomienda the tributes from the towns of Kitun and Taxamas and half of those of Xoca and Bacalar—an amount that he later claimed was greater than the four next largest encomiendas received by the other conquerors who accompanied him. Although he had to give up his encomienda, comprising Sacalum and half of Sotuta, upon receipt of the Bacalar towns, his wife and sons inherited his father's encomienda at Hocaba following the latter's death in the late 1540s.⁵

Among the other early encomenderos of Bacalar, all of whom presumably participated in the conquest of the region, were Martín Rodríguez, El Piloto, who held Chanlacan, where he was killed in 1646;⁶ Alonso Pacheco, Melchor's cousin; Pedro de Avila; Alonso Hernández; Juan Farfán; and possibly Juan Pérez de Castañeda. In 1547 the cabildo was composed of the following individuals:

Alcaldes ordinarios
Alonso Pacheco
Melchor Pacheco

Regidores

Pedro de Avila

Alonso Hernández

Juan Farfán

The *escribano público* (public scribe) that year was Juan Pérez de Castañeda, and we discover that Juan Garzón, who was to play a major role in the repacification of the province as *teniente de gobernador* in 1568, was also present in the villa.⁷ This cabildo composition—two *alcaldes* and three *regidores*—was the pattern to be followed until the 1570s.

Missionaries were absent from Bacalar during this first decade except for the visiting Franciscan, Fray Lorenzo de Bienvenida, who stayed for an unknown period of time between 1545 and 1547 on his way from Guatemala to join in Mérida the first group of Franciscan missionaries assigned to Yucatán.⁸ Bienvenida's harsh criticism of Pacheco's conquest techniques have already been cited in the previous chapter.

Melchor Pacheco left Bacalar not long after 1547 in order to attend to his father's estate in Mérida, and it appears that the original Spanish settlers began to break up due to the discouraging local situation. By 1551 his Bacalar *encomienda* as well as that of Pedro de Avila had been turned over to the Crown and were being contested locally by unnamed individuals who sought to take the case all the way to the *Audiencia de los Confines* in Guatemala. One of these individuals may have been Francisco de Magaña, who had participated in the Bacalar conquest and in 1551 was serving as the *procurador* (attorney-accountant) of Bacalar.⁹

The First Transformation

The first major turning point in the Spanish politics of Bacalar occurred in 1553, when Tomas López completed the first comprehensive *reñasación* (population recount for tribute-collecting purposes) of Yucatan. In that year Melchor Pacheco's original multi-town *encomienda* was finally turned over from the crown to four individuals: Juan Nuñez de Toledo, who in 1549 also held both Cozumel and Pole in *encomienda*;¹⁰ Juan Bautista; Juan Díaz; and Juan Pérez de Tordesillas. The net effect of this grant was to stabilize the local governance of the villa and to create the core of a local Spanish hierarchy that would dominate the town for several more decades.

Consistency in the Spanish composition of the town characterized this period. For several years the cabildo was dominated by a small core of individuals, most notably Juan Pérez de Tordesillas (who must have

died about 1565), Alonso Flores, Bachiller Antonio de Castro (a Portuguese settler), Juan Díaz, and Juan Nuñez de Toledo—who apparently left Bacalar shortly after 1555, presumably to administer his encomiendas at Cozumel and Pole. As we shall see later, intermarriage among the offspring of this new core of encomenderos was intense, ensuring the continuity of local domination throughout most of the remaining years of the century.

Our richest documentation for the Spanish community of Bacalar pertains to this period, despite the tiny community's struggles with poverty and its inability to govern its native subjects. These early leaders were apparently hardy pioneers, less ambitious but more patient than their conquistador predecessors. Willing to put up with the hardships of the location and the remote prospect for significant self-enrichment, they survived by means of their ability to create an economic and social world that few others would have found tolerable.

The Second Transformation

The last decades of the sixteenth century and the first few years of the seventeenth witnessed the gradual demise of this first regime. We may presume that the younger generation of Bacalareños were less committed to maintaining the scattered encomiendas of the province and that a combination of out-migration and early deaths contributed to a loss of control over the native population. By about 1608, however, there were signs of renewed interest by outsiders from Valladolid in reestablishing control, as at about that time a new reduction was carried out in the Tipu area. Following this initial effort, a series of reductions and resettlement schemes were implemented in what is now Belize. The effects of these activities, which appear to have climaxed around the time of the 1616 or 1617 Itza visit to Mérida under the direction of the Franciscan Juan de Orbita, were growing discontentment on the part of the Maya population and a widespread pattern of unrest that resulted in the general rebellion of 1638, the subsequent collapse of the Belize encomiendas, and the eventual abandonment of the villa of Bacalar.

Behind these reorganizational efforts, which amounted to the reconquest of the Belize encomiendas, was a group of related and influential men from Valladolid. This group was first dominated by Julio Sánchez de Aguilar, who became *alcalde ordinario* of Bacalar in 1609, and Bernardo Sánchez de la Seña, who served as *comisario de la real hacienda* (commissary of the royal treasury, apparently the former office of procurador) of the villa from 1609 to 1612. They and their kinsmen and retainers used the Bacalar province as a source of tribute and reparti-

miento income for two decades. Unlike their predecessors, who had fulfilled the requirements of encomienda possession by living in their assigned villa, the new encomenderos often operated in absentia, leaving their retainers (including their illegitimate offspring and, in one case, a related secular priest) to manage their affairs for them. This new group established a reputation in Mérida for fiscal graft, administrative corruption, and gross mistreatment of the native population.

The Third Transformation

Following the 1638 general rebellion, which will be described in detail in Chapter 5, the Sánchez de Aguilar family attempted to regain control over the native population by carrying out a series of reductions that resettled several hundred individuals from the southern Belize towns in the area in and around Bacalar, particularly in the naboría barrio of San Juan Extramuros and the coastal port town of Tamalcab. By then, however, control over the region had become a losing battle against an even more aggressive reduction policy pursued by the Maya leaders of Tipu and the increasing aggressiveness of foreign buccaneers.

The pirate Diego Lucifer de los Reyes, El Mulato, attacked a party of Spaniards carrying letters to Guatemala at the mouth of the Belize River in 1642 and soon thereafter robbed and pillaged the villa of Bacalar itself, kidnapping two of its Spanish inhabitants.¹¹ Spaniards and Mayas alike fled to the surrounding forests. The villa was briefly reestablished but suffered another similar attack by the pirate Abrahám in 1648. Shortly afterwards the remaining inhabitants abandoned Bacalar and reestablished the villa at the Maya town of Pacha about sixty kms to the north along the road to Chunhuhub.

By 1652 Bacalar was under the control of a largely new group of vecinos, with the sole continuity of one of the old guard, Juan Gómez de Santoyo. Dominant among this group was the captain Francisco Pérez, who, with little success, sought between 1652 and 1655 to regain control over the Belize encomiendas. His efforts, which were recognized several years ago by Scholes and Thompson,¹² will be reexamined in Chapter 7.

Pérez's attempts to reestablish what appear to have been his own encomiendas in Belize was apparently the last major effort by a Bacalareño to "reconquer" these elusive territories. During the following three decades there was a complete blackout of information on the exiled villa, and it was not until forces well beyond Bacalar itself sought to reconquer the region during the 1680s and 1690s that the community appeared again in the historical record.

Bacalar's Brief Renaissance

In late 1686 a wealthy and ambitious resident of Mérida, Juan del Castillo y Toledo, embarked on an entrada into the forests of La Pimienta west of the abandoned villa of Bacalar. His ultimate intention was to accomplish no less than the conquest of the Itzas, but his efforts resulted only in the establishment in 1687 of several reduction towns in the vicinity of Chanchana, southwest of Bacalar.¹³ This event marked the initiation of plans to carry out the conquest that would finally occur in 1697, although along a road far to the west of Chanchanha.

As a result of this new agenda, Bacalar was returned briefly to a minor limelight for the role that it played in negotiating with the leaders of Tipu and Tah Itza, especially in 1695. I have concluded from a census taken in 1688¹⁴ that Bacalar's population was by that year situated in or adjacent to Chunhuhub, as the matrícula in question included not only the "villa de Salamanca" but also "its jurisdiction" of the three Maya towns of Chunhuhub, Polyuc, and Xicinchoh. In 1726 Chunhuhub was still identified as "the town where the *república* of Bacalar resides."¹⁵

It is remarkable that at this late date there appears to have been genealogical continuity in the town membership from many years past. Reconstructing the 1688 Bacalar matrícula, it appears that the cabildo was comprised of the following individuals:

•
Alcalde ordinario

Capitán Diego Estevan de Castro

Regidores

Capitán Fernando Sánchez

Capitán Francisco de Hariza

Castro might have been a descendant of the sixteenth-century Bacalar settler Antonio de Castro, and Sánchez was probably related to the Valladolid Sánchezes who controlled the town during the earlier decades of the century. The procurador was Joseph de Escobar, a possible descendant of male relatives of Beatriz de Escobar, who had held the encomienda of Xoca over one hundred years earlier. Several *apellidos* of the men and women listed in this matrícula (i.e., Sánchez, Martín, Nuñez, Pérez, Delgado, and Franco) all suggest that despite the various transformations undergone by the community, a core of family membership had survived from each phase of its history.

Francisco de Hariza, as we shall see in Chapter 7, played a key role in the 1695–1696 negotiations with Tipuans and Itzas. He may well have

been an "outsider" to the villa, perhaps appointed by the incumbent governor as a *juez* for the purpose of collecting repartimiento products, as neither his name nor that of his wife, Hilaria Vásquez, was recorded in earlier records.

Following the Itza conquest of 1697, Bacalar "at Chunhuhub" evaporated for thirty years from the presently known historical record. The inhabitants remained at Chunhuhub during this period. The original town finally emerges again as a *place* in 1726, when Governor Antonio de Figueroa sent a reconnaissance mission to Lake Bacalar to assess the practicality of establishing a fort there in order to establish a beachhead against the growing threat of British logwood operations in Belize. The fort was constructed and the ruined town reoccupied beginning in 1729,¹⁶ but we do not know whether any of its new inhabitants were related to the old families at Chunhuhub. There were no longer any encomiendas in Belize, and hopes for a reconquest of regions south of the villa were a dream of the past. An era had been completed.

BACALAR AS A COLONIAL VILLA: THE TOWN AND ITS INHABITANTS

The Town

Cultural geography. The original villa of Salamanca de Bacalar was constructed on the old site of the Uaymil town of Bakhalal on the southwestern shore of the long, narrow Lake Bacalar. The choice of this site was problematical because of its relative inaccessibility. Located about four leagues (sixteen kms) inland from the mainland shore of what is now Chetumal Bay (known in colonial times as Ensenada de Bacalar), it could be reached from the sea only by means of canoes or by walking overland.

Three routes to the sea allowed Bacalareños to communicate with the outside world. Two of these were waterways, and of these two the most commonly used was the network of small streams that connected Lake Bacalar with the Río Hondo and from there to Chetumal Bay. Today this route is known as Chac Creek, apparently the same waterway identified by the name Xiuc on a 1726 map.¹⁷ The second canoe route passed through a series of channels (labelled Retiro San José on the 1879 Hübbe and Pérez map) that connected the northern end of Lake Bacalar with an opening on the shore (labelled P^a Sinantun on the same map) of the northern part of Chetumal Bay. From here it may have been possible to navigate by canoe along small streams through the mangroves (labeled R. Nichacté and R. Indio on this map) across the opposite mainland all

the way to the sea to a location called Tzuc Cox on the Hübbe-Pérez map.¹⁸ It is more likely, however, that larger boats entered the bay further to the south either through the apparent ancient canal that has been known as Bacalar Chico at least since the early seventeenth century or through the main entrance to Chetumal Bay to the south of Ambergris Cay, which bears the name Bacalar Grande. Bacalar Chico was also known as Toxecacao in 1726.¹⁹

The land route to Bacalar connected the southeastern shore of the lake, directly opposite the villa, with the port town of Tamalcab, located about one-quarter of a league inland from the coast.²⁰ Tamalcab is almost certainly the adjoining archaeological sites of La Iglesia (so named for its sizable standing colonial church *capilla* in ruins) and Oxtancah.²¹ Also known as Tamalcabo, Tahaman, Taxamas, and Tamacaz, this Maya town was among those assigned in encomienda to Melchor Pacheco in the 1540s; it remained Bacalar's only immediately accessible coastal outpost throughout the next century. It was the port and fishing town to which sea traders brought their wares for customs clearance on their way north or south along the coast, and it served those who did not pass inland to Bacalar itself as a resting, watering, and resupplying station for their continuing journeys.

Bacalar's inland location also connected the villa with locations to its north, as it was the end of a maintained road, dotted with small villages that served as hostelry stops for traders and other travellers on the long journeys to and from the Sierra towns of Mani, Tekax, and Oxkutzcab and to and from Valladolid. It was thus strategically located to monitor and serve human passage both across the wilds of the sparsely inhabited interior forest and along the frequently traveled coastline. Its inland location protected it to some extent from the predations of foreign pirates who plied the coast from the earliest years of its settlement, and its inhabitants could be warned of strange vessels by Maya watchmen stationed at Tamalcab and other small *vigía* settlements along the coast.

Several Maya towns were located near the villa, and it may be presumed that these, in addition to the naborías of San Juan Extramuros, supplied much of the labor and the encomienda income for Bacalar's inhabitants throughout its existence. Xoca, one of Melchor Pacheco's original encomienda towns, was located about six leagues (about twenty-four kms) away along the northern road, on the smaller Lake Xoca. Xoca was active around 1570 but had been abandoned by 1618.²² Another three and a half leagues (about fourteen kms) north of Xoca was the town of Chaclic, in ruins in 1726 but unrecorded in documents from earlier years.²³ Pacha, an encomienda of Bacalar, was located still another seven

leagues or so north of Chaclic. I suggested in Chapter 2 that Mazanahau was probably located along Chac Creek where that stream meets the Río Hondo, and that Yumpeten was on Lake Nohbec north of Lake Bacalar. We may assume that Mazanahau was the Mazanila that paid crown tributes in cacao throughout the first half of the seventeenth century and was the same place as Guazam on the 1726 reconnaissance map.²⁴ Yumpeten survived as an encomienda town into the same period. An *estancia* (cattle ranch) at the ancient site of Chetumal in 1618 may have been along the mainland at or near Tamalcab.²⁵

Still further south were estancias and cacao orchards associated with small Maya settlements near the mouth of the New River and the Río Hondo. Chinam, for instance, was probably situated at the point where the Río Hondo flows into the bay, today known as Punta Consejo and in 1726²⁶ as Punta Chilte.²⁷ The small settlement of Uatibal was located just inland from Lowrey's Bight to the east of the mouth of the New River.²⁸

Bacalar, then, was situated in the midst of a scattered group of communities that as a group provided its Spanish inhabitants with the conveniences of protection, agricultural production, and hospitality. These communities straddled several ecological and economic niches and made it possible for the Spanish vecinos to live in some comfort in their relative isolation on the shores of the lake. At the same time, however, Bacalareños were in a constant state of risk because of their dependency on these Maya communities for the services that they provided. It was this dependency that they were ultimately to regret, as there was little opportunity for them to monitor what was going on behind their backs among those whom they were forced to trust.

The physical town. There were two sections of Bacalar, the Spanish center and the Maya barrio of San Juan Extramuros; the Maya inhabitants, like those of other Spanish towns, were known as naborías. The Spanish center was located on the shore of the lake, but we do not know whether San Juan was behind it away from the lake or adjacent to it along the shore. It is most likely that for economic reasons (accessibility to fishing, in particular) San Juan was a lakeside barrio, resulting in a community that was narrowly stretched along the shore.²⁹ Bacalar had a plaza and at least two clearly defined streets.

On the plaza would have been situated the church used by the Spaniards, along with an adjacent cemetery. It is surprising that there is no early reference to a second church for the barrio of San Juan Extramuros, but in fact it appears that even the Mayas from the nearby towns were expected to hear mass in the Bacalar church and to clean the plaza and

cemetery while they were in town. Perhaps a second church for San Juan was constructed in later years, for in 1726 there were two ruined chapels in the abandoned town in addition to the principal church. One of these, it was said, was dedicated to Señor San Juan and the other to Nuestra Señora del Triunfo; the former was certainly the San Juan Extramuros chapel, while the latter was presumably a chapel for the Spanish vecinos.³⁰

The original Spanish church had been built in 1544 and was named at that time La Pura Concepción de Nuestra Señora for the town's vocation; this name survived at least until 1639. The original church had a stone *capilla mayor*, but the nave was made of thatch in the *ramada* style of most early rural churches.³¹ On Easter day in 1570 a fire broke out in the sacristy of the capilla, destroying a box of church ornaments, including altar hangings, the priest's and acolytes' vestments, crosses, books, and altar cloths.³² The church apparently survived, but support for the construction of a new church building soon emerged, only to be stopped by the powerful and crusty old Bachiller Antonio de Castro, the villa's procurador in 1570. By 1599 the church building had apparently not changed, as it was still described as being small and made of pole-and-palm thatch ("*pazijas*"). Given the town's poverty, the governor considered it to be sufficient for the inhabitants' needs.³³ In 1639 the church still had a stone *capilla mayor* and a thatched nave,³⁴ and the ruined church in 1726 was described as having a *capilla mayor* and sacristy that were roofed with beams (*vigas*), while the rest was thatched.³⁵ From this consistency of description it might be concluded that Bacalar's simple original church served the villa with only minor reconstruction from 1544 until its abandonment in the mid-seventeenth century.

This church, returned to use after Bacalar was reoccupied in 1729, burned in 1754 and was soon replaced by a much larger stone structure with buttresses and an arched roof (apparently covered by wood).³⁶ This building and another partially ruined *ramada*-style church were visited by Escalona Ramos in 1937 and described by him in some detail in a 1943 publication.³⁷ The eighteenth-century stone church is still in use today as Bacalar's principal church, although it has been completely rebuilt and in some aspects altered beyond recognition. The *ramada* church described by Escalona Ramos may have been the church of San Juan Extramuros or, alternatively, the remains of the structure destroyed by fire.

Presumably also located on the plaza were the *casas reales* (royal houses), described by Fray Bartolomé de Fuensalida in 1618 as large, thatched houses in which visitors were housed.³⁸ The first record of the

town's jail was made when in 1570 Juan Pizarro was ordered by the *alcalde* to construct this building in fulfillment of the payment of a fifty-peso fine.³⁹

The Spaniards lived in houses on plots immediately adjacent to one another, and there are numerous references in the "Residencia de Bacalar" to the presence of more than one structure (*casas*, the plural form) in their yards. Some of these are described as being "next to" those of the neighbor, while others were "in front" of the neighbor's lot, suggesting that there were at least two streets with yards that backed up on one another. True *vecinos* were required in Bacalar and elsewhere to own *casas pobladas* (houses which they actually occupied) in order to be eligible for election to the *cabildo*. Such *casas pobladas*, we may assume, referred to the elite dwellings of the married *encomenderos*, who were undoubtedly clustered nearest the plaza and whose multi-household compounds included their married sons or daughters and their spouses and children. Such a multi-household compound was headed by the Bachiller Antonio de Castro, whose three sons-in-law all appear to have lived in his compound. The yards had in them small structures for chickens and pigs, cared for by the women of the households. At least some of the *vecinos* had resident female Mayas as household servants.

Of the actual physical form of these houses we have only the following description by Alejandro Joseph Güelles, who reconnoitered the ruins along the shore of the lake in 1726:

Of the dwellings three are found to be made of stone and mortar. Two of these are destroyed and of no use, but the walls of the other one can be repaired at little cost, aligning them and filling the places where the roots have created cracks. This last one has five rooms that, if roofed over well with palm thatch or whatever seems best, would turn out to be a decent living place. The rest of the population appears to have been in lots with palm thatched houses, as can be seen from some walls that although collapsed still have some forked posts. There is also a well visible a short distance from the church, but with the passage of time it is half dried up. The site is so grown over that it appears never to have been inhabited, and with an abundance of trees with allspice, wax, and honey.⁴⁰

Such a description of physical poverty—except for the three masonry houses and the partially masonry church—would fit the abandoned nineteenth-century Maya villages found today in Quintana Roo. It is a picture of a far poorer community than Ichnul, whose numerous ma-

sonry elite houses and large, elegant masonry church have only recently been partially reoccupied after a century of abandonment since the Caste War of Yucatan.

The Economy of Bacalar

The economic base of the villa of Bacalar is still poorly understood in contrast to the richness of available detail concerning its social fabric. Actual tribute income was limited and must have comprised a relatively small proportion of total wealth. There were no more than 300 Maya tributaries who owed annual payments to encomenderos, and they would have contributed no more than 1,500 pesos per ten or so individuals. It is known that there was at least one cattle estancia at the old site of Chetumal, but this and any others would have provided only meat for the tiny community.⁴¹ Some of the Spanish inhabitants maintained their own cacao orchards near Maya villages in the vicinity of the lower New River, and salt was probably extracted from old salt flats on Ambergris Cay.⁴²

The vecinos of Bacalar probably earned more from trade than from all other sources of income. They plied the coasts of Belize between Bacalar and Golfo Dulce (Lake Izabal) regularly, on occasion picking up shipwrecked parties on the cays and bringing them back to the villa until they or others could take them on to their destinations.⁴³ During the seventeenth century they and other sailors passing by regularly paid the almojarifazgos or import-export duties, although in such small sums that one must assume—as did the royal officials of the time—gross fraud in the keeping of the villa accounts.⁴⁴ Bacalar was known, in fact, as a port town, even though most of the sea-faring business was transacted at the coastal port of Tamalcab. The Spaniards transported their goods, including wine, cacao, and other agricultural products and probably cloth, in large double canoes, or falcas, in which even horses could be moved by placing their legs in each of the two lashed vessels.

Along with the Maya population, the Bacalareños also participated in inland trade with northern Yucatan, as this summary of testimony from the Residencia de Bacalar demonstrates:

Salvador Carrillo versus the Indian Traders

Carrillo regularly impounded trade goods, particularly cotton cloth, coming to Bacalar from the Sierra via his mother-in-law's encomienda of Xoca, just to the northwest of Bacalar. On some occasions he sent messages to carriers hired by the caciques of towns such as Mani and Yaxcaba and by Spanish traders, ordering that the carriers take these goods

to his own house, where he would pay the traders less than their market value. On at least one occasion the goods in question were intended for two of Antonio de Castro's sons-in-law. The carriers complained to other vecinos about this practice, but they dared not complain to Castro, according to one witness, lest he place them in his stocks.⁴⁵

We do not know the true extent of local Spanish involvement in trade, as only cases that involve disputes between local Spanish parties were likely to be mentioned. It is reasonable to assume, however, that nearly every Spaniard was a trader, not only with points south along the coast and points north in the interior, but also with their own encomienda towns, from whom they received agricultural and forest products in return for the cotton cloth and other manufactured goods that they distributed throughout the province. This subject will be explored in greater depth in Chapter 4 in the context of Spanish-Maya interactions.

Population

No less striking than Bacalar's physical poverty was its consistently tiny population. Hardly a bustling town, the villa was always considerably smaller than many of the Maya towns in the northern sector of the peninsula; it may have been smaller than Tipu. The Indian population of the province as a whole will be discussed in Chapter 4. Here we are concerned only with the Spanish, Indian, and casta population of the villa.

The demographic characteristics of either the non-Indian or the Indian population are poorly understood. Early death for many is evident from the historical record, and we may assume that epidemic diseases affecting the rest of the peninsula, especially smallpox and yellow fever, must have been a major factor in the community's population history. To these diseases should be added malaria, which was almost certainly the cause of the fevers that brought down Francisco Pérez at the end of his journey to the Tipu region in 1655.⁴⁶

The Spanish population. In only one year (1688) are we fortunate to have a complete matrícula of all members of the Bacalar community. By this time the settlement had moved to Chunhuhub, but this census may well reflect many of the conditions of earlier times. For prior years we must rely on official estimates of the total vecino population of Spaniards; on reconstructed lists of individuals known to be living in the community at that time, drawn up from a wide variety of sources; and, for the naboría population, on tribute accounts. It is both surprising and fortunate that for the Spanish community the various sources are quite

consistent, allowing us to reconstruct a reasonably accurate population history.

No adequate guidelines exist for a conversion factor that would result in a total population on the basis of male Spanish vecinos in a community such as Bacalar. In such a community there appears to have been a fairly large number of single younger males, including various castas who are not accounted for in any counts other than the 1688 census. Because of these special conditions, the 3.425 conversion factor from male tributaries suggested by García Bernal for Maya towns⁴⁷ does not appear appropriate for this case. The 1688 census at Bacalar produces a 4.9 conversion factor if an assumption of two offspring per married Spanish male is accepted, or a 3.9 factor based on an assumption of one offspring per married Spanish male.⁴⁸ As a rough estimate I have decided to use a 4.4 conversion factor when the number of male Spanish vecinos is known. For 1544, however, I have assumed the absence of Spanish women and children in the period during the establishment of the villa. Table 3.1 summarizes the non-Indian population history for the period 1544–1688.

Although there was a slight increase in the Spanish population during the late sixteenth century, it can be seen that the villa's Spanish community never exceeded that of a small village. This fact alone is of major importance in attempting to understand the inability of the vecinos to control the widely dispersed Maya population. One is left with the impression that the only reason for residence in such a tiny outpost would have been to allow those who were too poor, unconnected, and unskilled to exercise control over the most meagre of resources.

Castas and Black Slaves. Absent from these population reconstructions is any firm indication of the size of the population of castas, about whom we know very little. Several *mulatos* were identified at Bacalar during the seventeenth century, but these are undistinguished for the most part from the population of Spaniards in both population counts and lists of inhabitants. In one case a royal official in Mérida complained that before 1620 a mulato son of a Spanish alcalde had served as alcalde ordinario.⁴⁹ In 1638 the governor also noted the presence of mulatos in the town,⁵⁰ and the 1688 matrícula of Bacalar listed two mulatos.⁵¹ Beyond this we have no specific information.⁵²

Mestizos are not identified in the record as such until 1688, when Bacalar's population resided at Chunhuhub. In that year the town had four married mestizo men. Three of these had the old Bacalar Spanish surname of Franco, suggesting intermarriage of earlier Francos with Indian women.⁵³

TABLE 3.1. Non-Indian Population of Salamanca de Bacalar, 1544–1688

Year	Maximum probable Spanish male vecinos	Minimum Spanish male vecinos	Estimated total all ages
1544 ^a	20		88
1547 ^b		9	
1551 ^c	8		35
1553 ^d		7	
1554 ^d		8	
1567 ^e		9	
1568 ^e		12	
1569 ^f	18		79
1570 ^g	15		66
1571 ^h		9	
1599 ^h			25
1605 ⁱ	20		88
1630 ^j		9	
1631 ^j		9	
1639 ^k	28		123
1655 ^l		9	
1688 ^m	10		44

Sources:

- ^aCárdenas Valencia, *Relación historial*, p. 35.
- ^bAGI, Escribanía de Cámara 304B, Probanza de Melchor Pacheco, 1566.
- ^cRelación de los conquistadores y pobladores, 25 June 1551, in *Colección de documentos inéditos*, p. 192.
- ^dAGI, Justicia 246, Residencia al Don Diego Quijada, 1566.
- ^eAGI, Justicia 253, Residencia de Bacalar, 1571.
- ^fResidencia de Bacalar; AGI, Patronato 69, Probanza de Juan Garzón, 1569.
- ^gResidencia de Bacalar; AGI, México 99, Probanza de Salamanca de Bacalar, 21 April 1570.
- ^hAGI, México 359, Governor to Crown, 19 June 1599.
- ⁱAGI, México 369, Bishop Diego Vásquez de Mercado to Crown, 12 December 1605.
- ^jAGI, Contaduría 914; Petición de Cristóbal Sánchez, 1631.
- ^kCárdenas Valencia, *Relación historial*, p. 95.
- ^lAGI, México 158, Méritos y servicios del capitán Francisco Pérez, 1661.
- ^mAGI, Contaduría 914, Razón y certificación de todas calidades de gentes . . . en esta villa de Salamana [sic] de Bacalar, 25 March 1688.

Note: The column listing minimum Spanish male vecinos is based on reconstructed lists of names of male vecinos known to have been in Bacalar during the year in question. In nearly all cases, however, these lists are not complete and have not been used to compute estimated totals. Estimated totals for all ages are based on a conversion factor of 4.4 applied to the maximum probable Spanish male vecinos, except for the figure for 1599, which is a direct estimate of total population from the original source.

Mention of a mulato alcalde implies the presence of Black slaves in Bacalar. Although some witnesses claimed in 1571 that Spanish inhabitants of the villa were too poor to own any slaves, others noted that Salvador Carrillo owned one Black slave.⁵⁴ In any event, the number of slaves in Bacalar was insignificant in the sixteenth century, and there is no record of any at all in the seventeenth century.

The Indian Population. It is particularly difficult even to estimate the size of the Maya naboría population of Bacalar, which probably fluctuated far more widely due to frequent flight and the countereffects of reductions. In 1599 there were said to be no more than 150 Indians living in the villa, but it is probable that this figure referred to the total number of tributaries in the province.⁵⁵ Because naboría Indians paid an annual tax of one peso (eight reales), it is possible to calculate the number of male tributaries from the total annual value of the tribute paid in reales (correcting for *diezmo* [tithe] payments) by dividing that figure by eight.⁵⁶ I do not assume, however, as did Cook and Borah, that a conversion factor of two (which would assume a population of adults only) would result in a satisfactory population estimate for the naboría population. Therefore, in Table 3.2 I apply García Bernal's conversion factor of 3.425 for the first half of the seventeenth century (1979:77).

Even recognizing the relative arbitrariness of the 3.425 conversion factor, the total reconstructed population figures are low, ranging from a low of 61 persons toward the end of Bacalar's existence (1640) to a momentary high of 241 in 1615. I am inclined to accept them as reasonably accurate reflections of degrees of population change in the naboría community because they reflect with precision events that we know occurred that would have effected population size. We know, for example, that there was a reduction in the Tipu area about 1608, the effects of which can be seen in a slight rise in tributes between 1603 and 1609 of six pesos, equivalent to an increase of seven tributaries. A more significant reduction occurred in 1615, resulting that year in an increase in tributaries of thirty-three, suggesting a total population increase of about 112 persons. This increase was noted in the 1615 accounts as including "los naturales recién poblados en el barrio de San Juan Extramuros."⁵⁷ This increase evaporated the following year, however, probably due to the undocumented flight of those who were reduced. Finally, it is not surprising to see a general decrease in these figures after 1620, due to the generally higher documented level of Maya discontent throughout the province during this period. The precipitous drop in 1639 and 1640 clearly followed upon the general rebellion of 1638. Apparently most of

TABLE 3.2. Tributes and Population Reconstruction of Indians of San Juan Extramuros, 1599–1640

Year	<i>Paid to Treasury</i>	<i>Reconstructed total, including diezmos</i>	<i>No. of tributaries</i>	<i>Estimated total population</i>
1599				150
1603	34 p. 1 t.	38.0 p.	38	130
1609	39 p. 3 t.	43.8 p.	44	151
1611	38 p. 4 t.	42.8 p.	43	147
1612	35 p. 4 t.	39.4 p.	39	134
1613	36 p. 0 t.	40.0 p.	40	137
1614	34 p. 0 t. ^a	37.8 p.	38	130
1615	63 p. 5 t. ^b	70.7 p.	71	243
1616	35 p. 0 t.	38.9 p.	39	134
1617–18	70 p. 6 t.	78.6 p.	39 ^c	134
1619	32 p. 2 t.	35.8 p.	36	123
1620	33 p. 1 t.	36.8 p.	37	127
1621	29 p. 1 t.	32.4 p.	32	110
1626	30 p. 6 t.	34.2 p.	34	116
1631	40 p. 2 t.	44.7 p.	45	154
1632	34 p. 2 t.	38.1 p.	38	130
1639	25 p. 4 t.	28.3 p.	28	96
1640	16 p. 0 t.	17.8 p.	18	62

Sources: All figures except for 1599 are from AGI, Contaduría 911, 912, 913, 914, and 915A. The figure for 1599 is a direct estimate of the number of Indians living at Bacalar in Bishop Fray Juan Izquierdo's report to the king, 15 June 1599, AGI, México 359 (published in Scholes et al., *Documentos para la historia de Yucatán*, vol. 2, pp. 116–19). The latter is particularly interesting because it conforms so closely with the estimates based on tributary reconstructions.

^aA later addition to the text reads that "this newly settled town or barrio is not to be taxed and is charged what they wish to give."

^bThe high figure includes "the natives recently settled in the barrio of San Juan Extramuros."

^cThis is an annual average for 1617–1618.

Note: Estimated total population is calculated on the basis of a conversion factor of 3.425.

the Mayas who were reduced to the Bacalar area were sent to Tamalcab, where they would pay tributes to individual encomenderos.

For the following three years we can estimate roughly the villa's total population, as Table 3.3 demonstrates. It is tempting to draw conclusions about the negative correlation in population change in these two groups between 1631 and 1639, possibly relating growth in the non-Indian population to the conditions that led to the 1638 rebellion and the

TABLE 3.3. Estimated Total Population of Salamanca de Bacalar for
1605, 1631, 1639

Year	Non-Indians	Indians	Total
1605	88	130	218
1631	100	153	253
1639	123	95	218

Note: These rough estimates are based on interpretation of the figures in Tables 3.1 and 3.2.

subsequent decline in San Juan’s population. The numbers are so small that care should be taken in drawing any such conclusions, however. So small are they, in fact, that it is difficult to comprehend the community as an effective social entity. How could a village of this size have pretended to be the administrative villa for a region as vast and dispersed as this one? It is to the culture and organization of this community that we now turn in search of answers to this question.

Bacalar Society

The cabildo. Like all Spanish colonial towns and cities, the heart of Bacalar’s political life was the cabildo or town council. Because of its small size, however, Bacalar’s cabildo always made up the bulk of the community’s principal male citizens and was thus the focus of social as well as political activities. During the sixteenth century the members of Bacalar’s cabildo were particularly active and vociferous, and it is through an examination of cabildo membership, the rotation of positions of authority, and the complaints made about its members that we can extract some of the principles that were fundamental to community organization.

In the early years the cabildo consisted of two alcaldes (or alcaldes ordinarios), three regidores, a scribe, and a procurador. The alcaldes shared principal executive and judicial authority in the community and, with the regidores, solved the principal issues of the day during periodic meetings. The scribe was responsible for preparing official correspondence and keeping the cabildo records up to date, and the procurador (later known as the comisario) collected the taxes and maintained the accounts. By the 1570s the council had been reorganized to include only one alcalde and four regidores.⁵⁸ Ideally, the outgoing members elected the new membership at the end of the year.

By definition, the cabildo members were encomenderos who maintained households in the town. Not all qualified individuals necessarily

rotated through these positions, however, which tended to be dominated by strong men whose personalities and patronage managed to secure their election year after year. The principle of strong rule by the few was consistently applied throughout the entire history of the villa, beginning with the brief tenure of the Pachecos through the decline of the community in the mid-seventeenth century. Although the available information is incomplete, certain individuals stand out as prominent repeaters to cabildo appointments. During the sixteenth century these were as listed in Table 3.4.

Other individuals served in these positions during these years, but the eight persons in Table 3.4 appear to have been the most consistently politically active. Of them all, Juan Pérez de Tordesillas was the most remarkable, virtually controlling the position of alcalde throughout a decade. Much more is known, however, about Bachiller Antonio de Castro, a Portuguese who brought his wife and daughters to Bacalar about 1553 and proceeded to marry off the daughters to three men whom he recruited to join the community. He apparently succeeded Pérez as the most influential patron of the younger generation, and he almost certainly held additional appointments as alcalde that are not recorded here.

During this early period cabildo officials seldom served as scribes, in part because not all of them were literate. It is probable for the same reason that they seldom served as procurador (the town's official accountant and tax collector), a position, like that of scribe, also normally granted to encomenderos. During the seventeenth century, when records are less complete for the cabildos but detailed for the provincial treasury in Mérida, these lesser positions of scribe and procurador (or comisario) were highly prized ones. Juan Gómez de Santoyo, for example, served as scribe in 1606 and 1607, as comisario from 1609 to 1612 and again in 1618, and finally as alcalde many years later in 1654 and 1655. Juan Sánchez de Aguilar (who was probably Juan Gómez de Santoyo's brother-in-law) served as comisario in 1614 and 1616 and as alcalde in 1615, when he carried out a major reduction in Belize; at some point he served as regidor as well. Juan Alonso Díaz de Aguilar was alcalde in 1620 and 1636 and scribe in 1632. Other members of the Sánchez, Aguilar, and Díaz families rotated through these various positions throughout the century, tightly controlling every aspect—especially the financial one—of the community's affairs.

During this later period, however, the commitment of the villa's leaders to maintain their presence in the community declined. Juan Sánchez de Aguilar, for example, because encomendero of Chanlacan and Yumpeten in the Bacalar province in 1625, but at that time he was apparently

TABLE 3.4. Principal Cabildo Members, Salamanca de Bacalar, 1547–1576

Year	Cabildo Member and Position (<i>A</i> = <i>Alcalde</i> , <i>R</i> = <i>Regidor</i>)							
	Antonio	Juan	Juan	Alonso	Alonso	Alonso	Juan Pérez de	Diego de
	de Castro	Delgado	Díaz	Flores	Hernández	Palomo	Tordesillas	Riveros
1547					R			
1553				A				
1554	R		R	A	R		A	
1555								
1556			A				R	
1557					R		A	
1558			R		R			
1559	R						A	R
1560								
1561			R		R		A	
1562								R
1563								
1564							A	
1565			A					
1566								
1567	R		A			A		
1568			A	R		R		R
1569	R	R				A		
1570				R				
1571	A	A	R			R		R
1576	R	R	R					

Sources: Relación de los conquistadores y pobladores que había en la provincia de Yucatán, en la ciudad de Mérida, 25 June 1551, in *Colección de documentos inéditos del Archivo de Indias*, vol. 14, p. 195; AGI, Justicia 251, Proceso contra Hernando Dorado, 1564–1565; AGI, México 924, Title of encomienda to Melchor Pacheco, 1 Oct. 1565, f. 2204v–6v; AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 304B, Probanza de Melchor Pacheco, 1566; AGI, Justicia 246, Residencia al Don Diego Quijada, 1566; AGI, Patronato 69, Probanza de Juan Garzón, 1569; AGI, Justicia 253, Residencia de Bacalar, 1571; AGI, México 359, Governor to Crown, 24 March 1576; AGI, México 1952, Confirmación de una encomienda en Juan Sánchez de Aguilar, 16 Oct. 1630.

Note: These data are not complete for these years, and others not listed here served occasionally on the cabildo.

living in Valladolid. In fact, the closing certifications of his title to the encomienda were witnessed in Valladolid and recorded in the *libro de cabildo* (cabildo book) there.⁵⁹ Although the cabildo, other villa officials, and their retainers may have lived in Bacalar during their term of office in these years, most of the town's encomenderos kept their residences in Valladolid. During one crisis in 1608, in fact, the resident cabildo in Bacalar had to request the governor to instruct the absentee encomenderos to return from Valladolid to defend the villa against a feared attack by fugitive Mayas.⁶⁰

Two other positions of authority in the villa, those of *alguacil* and *mayordomo*, were apparently filled regularly, although we know little about the powers and responsibilities of these officials. The alguacil appears to have been a local police official who followed the orders of the cabildo officers to collect Indian tributes and, presumably, to administer punishment when ordered to do so by the cabildo. Alguaciles seem to have been named especially for entradas, such as those of 1568–1569, on which they were given powers to collect Indians for purposes of reduction. Mayordomos were the custodians of civic property, including the church and its ornaments. While alguaciles were relatively low-ranking villa officials, the mayordomos were elder elites.

As we shall see, the holders of the position of *alcalde* took most seriously the authority of their office, although abuse of their powers to arrest, detain, and otherwise limit the freedom of both Indians and non-Indians was a frequent cause of complaint. They were highly visible community figures, carrying with them at all times their staffs of office. If they were seen without this symbol of authority, they were subject to criticism and to charges that they were not taking the responsibilities of office with due seriousness. If they left the town for any reason they were expected to turn over the staff to the seniormost regidor, who acted as substitute *alcalde* during their absence.

Under normal circumstances the cabildo was elected on New Year's Day each year. The outgoing regidores met with the entire cabildo and cast their votes for the two new *alcaldes ordinarios* and the three new regidores. The choices were few in Bacalar, as there were probably never more than ten or so qualified *vecinos*. Therefore, the positions rotated among this small number of individuals, whose elections normally may have been achieved without incident. The elections were important, as the *alcaldes* wielded considerable power but would likely abuse their authority if their personalities were particularly impetuous. In 1569, however, a crisis emerged in the election process that gives us considerable insight into the town's factional organization.

Two unusual factors led to the 1569 crisis: the arrival of Juan Garzón as *teniente de gobernador* in 1568 and the pursuit, under his direction, of two major *entradas* into the remote areas of the province in order to quell revolts and reduce a portion of the rural Maya population to locations closer to the villa. These *entradas* are discussed in detail in Chapter 2 in relation to patterns of Maya resistance. The second and most ambitious of them resulted in the repacification of southern territories that included Tipu and parts of Manche Chol territory, and it was during this one that the governmental crisis at Bacalar occurred. Garzón had taken several *vecinos* from Bacalar with him on this and the other *entradas*, in this case including the following individuals:⁶¹

Rodrigo Carrillo
Diego Méndez
Alonso Palomo
Juan Pizarro
Juan Rodríguez

Francisco Palomino, who would later become an outspoken supporter of Indian rights as Yucatan's *defensor de naturales*, also participated in this and the other *entradas* at the age of only twenty-six or twenty-seven years.

Rodrigo Carrillo was one of the town's two *cabildo* scribes (Luis Bautista was the other) and probably served in this capacity on the *entrada*; Garzón also brought with him his own official scribe, Juan Martín. Alonso Palomo, about thirty-seven years old, had served as *alcalde* in 1567 and had established himself as a violent opponent of Castro and his sons-in-law. He was one of the three *regidores* at the time of the *entrada* and therefore could not participate in the upcoming election unless the party returned before New Year's Day. Diego Méndez, Juan Pizarro, and Juan Rodríguez were all young men capable of the rigors of the *entrada*. Méndez, about thirty years old, was a son-in-law of the elderly Portuguese town potentate, *Bachiller* Antonio de Castro. Pizarro was apparently a young man with few ties to other members of the community; he became a scribe in 1570. Finally, Juan Rodríguez was a young Portuguese who enjoyed the patronage of the elderly Castro.

While this group was on its way back to Bacalar, Garzón drafted an order at Lamanai on 13 December 1568 requiring that the upcoming *cabildo* election be held according to law, threatening to impose a thirty-peso fine against any of the *regidores* who refused to participate.⁶² He complained that previous elections had favored certain individuals and

had been affected by factional differences, claiming that such favoritism was counter to law and charging the regidores to behave fairly. Nonetheless, the two resident regidores, Diego de Riveros and Alonso Flores, decided not to hold the election on the appointed day, purportedly out of fear of incurring yet other fines should they do so in Palomo's absence.

The entrada party finally returned on the 3rd or 4th of January, and Garzón immediately called a meeting of the full cabildo, which consisted of the three aforementioned regidores and the two *alcaldes ordinarios*, Juan Díaz and Juan Delgado. This was a highly charged group, as Delgado, Díaz, Palomo, and Riveros comprised a notoriously solid faction against Flores and his own allies Castro, Pizarro, and Castro's sons-in-law Diego Méndez and Bartolomé de Bohorquez. The bitterly divided regidores continued to resist Garzón's demands that the election be held, but Garzón threatened to fine them 500 pesos should they not do so. Taking the threat seriously this time, they finally cast their votes as follows:

<i>Voting regidor</i>	<i>Choices for alcalde</i>	<i>Choices for regidores</i>
Alonso Flores	Juan de Magaña Padilla Miguel de Paz	Antonio de Castro Juan Delgado Juan Díaz
Alonso Palomo	Juan de Magaña Padilla Diego de Riveros	Juan Delgado Juan Díaz Miguel de Paz
Diego de Riveros	Juan de Magaña Padilla Alonso Palomo	Juan Delgado Juan Díaz Miguel de Paz

The voting pattern was only partially along factional lines, with Palomo and Riveros voting for each other but all three agreeing upon Magaña as a compromise candidate. De Paz, another compromise candidate, was chosen by all three for one position or the other. Flores voted for his patron Castro, while all three managed to agree upon Delgado and Díaz for regidor.

In this case it was Garzón who was expected to break the deadlocks, but he did so in an unexpected manner. Not surprisingly, he named Magaña as *alcalde*. Magaña, apparently another son-in-law of Castro but a person not involved in local struggles, had never held a cabildo position. Garzón passed over Riveros, who had been regidor in 1562 as well as 1568, without comment, although Riveros was certainly due a chance to be *alcalde*. Two factors that could have influenced his decision

were Riveros’s notorious sexual license with his resident Maya concubines (leading his wife to note that they had not slept together since arriving from Spain many years earlier) and the fact that he was the father-in-law of Juan Delgado, a unanimous choice for regidor. Garzón decided also to deny the position to de Paz, who had never held a cabildo position, as de Paz had left the villa and it was not known whether he intended to return. The remaining choice was Palomo, who, it was incorrectly claimed, had not held the position before. Palomo, then, became alcalde in 1569 just after serving as regidor in 1568 and alcalde in 1567.

Garzón agreed that Delgado should be named regidor, but he declined to name Delgado’s ally Juan Díaz, who had also received three votes. Instead he named Castro, who had served as regidor in 1553, 1559, and 1567 and also may well have been alcalde. Further, he named de Paz, despite the latter’s absence; de Paz, however, did eventually return to serve out his position. The final makeup of the cabildo, despite the apparent unfairness of Garzón’s appointments, was a masterpiece of factional compromise:

<i>Alcaldes</i>	<i>Regidores</i>
Juan de Magaña Padilla	Antonio de Castro
Alonso Palomo	Juan Delgado
	Miguel de Paz

Palomo, the man of experience, balanced Magaña’s inexperience and nonfactional reputation. Magaña’s and Castro’s appointments satisfied the pro-Castro faction, while Delgado’s and Palomo’s satisfied the opposing group. Miguel de Paz, known to favor the latter group, was hardly an issue given his absence.

This episode provides a glimpse into petty power politics, demonstrating the formalities that were imposed upon personal differences and thus succeeding in making this unlikely tiny community resemble a working administrative villa. Behind the exterior of formal politics, however, were informal networks and factions that drove wedges into the villa’s social fabric. Of these, kinship ties were among the most important.

Kinship. The principal figures in the history of Spanish Bacalar were strongly interconnected by marriage and bilateral kinship. The major transformations undergone by the community in the early seventeenth century were undergirded by kinship connections that had been forged during the mid-sixteenth century and that provided continuity of membership recruitment until the end of the seventeenth century. Fundamental to this process of continuity was the requirement that holders of

encomiendas be able to demonstrate their legitimate descent from early settlers or conquerors. Such demonstration was made possible by the maintenance of public archives that contained probanzas of both early and later settlers, proving by means of sworn testimony the descent of junior generations with their seniors. It is thanks to these records, brought out time and again as opposers to encomienda claims sought to justify their own legitimate rights, that we are able to provide such reconstructions.

The reassignment of the Bacalar encomiendas in 1553 brought a new generation of Spaniards to the villa. As we have seen, these included Juan Pérez de Tordesillas, Juan Díaz, Juan Nuñez de Toledo, and Juan Bautista, who assumed control over the former encomiendas of Melchor Pacheco. Pérez and Díaz appear to have forged no kinship ties with others who came at the same time, and Nuñez apparently moved away at an early date. Bautista may, however, have had a son, Luis, who served as scribe during the 1560s but did not marry into the other new families. It is among the other early settlers that we find the beginnings of Bacalar society.

Among these pioneers were Diego de Riveros, Alonso Hernández de Santiago, Alonso Flores, and Bachiller Antonio de Castro, all of whom soon were tightly connected through a network of kinship. Flores began his service in 1553, when he was about thirty-two years old, and Castro and Hernández began theirs in 1554, when Castro was already about fifty-two years old. A later record claimed that Hernández had been one of the early conquerors of the province. Riveros, who held the encomienda of Chanlacan and Yumpeten (formerly held by Martín Rodríguez el Piloto, who was killed by his subjects in 1547), assumed his first cabildo offices no later than 1559, when he was about forty-nine years old. Castro and his wife, Marina de Vargas, brought at least four daughters with them, three of whom they married to young men who later assumed cabildo positions (Bartolomé de Bohorquez, Juan de Magaña Padilla, and Diego Méndez). The fourth daughter, Luisa de Castro, married Juan García de Escobar, also a vecino of the villa, whose sister, Beatriz de Escobar, assumed the encomienda of Xoca upon the death of her husband, Alonso Hernández de Santiago, sometime between 1567 and 1571.

Isabel de Escobar, the daughter of Beatriz de Escobar and Alonso Hernández de Santiago, married Mateo Delgado, who was later assigned the Xoca encomienda, probably upon the death of Beatriz. Mateo Delgado was likely the son of Juan Delgado, whose father was Diego de Riveros. Closing the gap of bilateral kinship was Alonso Flores, who was

a generation younger than the other early settlers and who eventually married Juan García de Escobar's niece.

Other kinship ties continued to develop over the years. Salvador Carrillo was likely married to a daughter of Beatriz de Escobar and Alonso Hernández de Santiago (although one witness, probably mistakenly, claimed that he was Beatriz de Escobar's brother-in-law). Salvador was also the brother-in-law of Alonso Palomo, and Miguel de Paz and may have been the brother of Rodrigo Carrillo, who served as the cabildo scribe.

At some point a marriage took place that allied Bacalar with a much larger, peninsula-wide kinship network. Juana de Escobar, the daughter of Juan García de Escobar and Luisa de Castro (the daughter of Antonio de Castro and Marina de Vargas) married Captain Juan Sánchez de Aguilar. Her husband was the son of Captain Bernardo Sánchez de Aguilar and Ana de Aguilar of Valladolid; Ana's father, Fernando de Aguilar, who had been one of Valladolid's original encomenderos, was killed during the 1546 uprising. This Valladolid-based family became the dominant force in the history of Bacalar throughout most of the seventeenth century.

Juan Sánchez de Aguilar was one of several children of Juan Sánchez de la Seña, including Francisco, Lorenzo, María, and possibly Hernando, Julio, Luis, and Cristóbal. The father, his son Juan, and his other probable children Juan, Julio, Luis, and Cristóbal held a variety of offices in Bacalar during the first half of the century, as did others among their relatives. Hernando Sánchez de Aguilar held the Belize encomienda towns of Campin, Soite, and Mayapan, which he gave up upon his marriage to Francisca Cuello.⁶³ Cristóbal married Isabel de Sosa, whose sister was the wife of Diego Rodríguez, a vecino of Mérida who received a reorganized encomienda in Belize in 1622—the final result of Juan Sánchez de Aguilar's efforts to reduce the Belize Maya, including the Tipu region, in 1615. The Sosa daughters were descendants of powerful Valladolid families that included among their founders the early settlers Juan de Cárdenas and Alonso Nortes de Sosa. One of the opposers to this encomienda was Juan Gómez Galván, who had married the granddaughter of Beatriz de Escobar and Alonso Hernández de Santiago, among the first holders of the Xoca encomienda. Gómez Galván was denied the encomienda, ostensibly because he could not prove his wife's ancestors' role in the settlement of Bacalar. It is ironic that documents that would have enabled this vecino of Bacalar to prove his case against these Valladolid outsiders had been delivered to Spain half a century earlier, and were unread until now.

Everyday Life on the Frayed Edges

Exasperated by the sorry state of the accounts submitted by the comisario of Bacalar, Julio Sarmiento Palacio, a royal official in Mérida, wrote in 1620 that

that villa is inhabited by the most miserable people in all the Indies, in a region so remote and poor that there is scarcely anyone who knows how to read and write, and where a mulatto, the son of an alcalde, was alcalde ordinario. And it is lucky that there is anyone who wants to inhabit that villa.⁶⁴

In a similar state of frustrated anger over the exploitive behavior of the Bacalareños toward their native subjects, the governor, the Marqués de Santo Floro, wrote to the king during the 1638 rebellion that "life is so barbarous there that they have apprehended two commissary governors sent [to investigate charges of their wrongdoings against the Indians], setting up gallows in the plazas in order to hang them; these were lucky to escape and live to tell the tale."⁶⁵ The state of Bacalar had reached a low point in the early seventeenth century, as the absentee encomenderos put daily matters in the hands of an apparently ruthless band of local cutthroats who roamed the countryside extorting cacao and other goods from the Mayas, whom they treated with little respect or even civility.

Thanks to the detailed charges brought by several local witnesses in the 1571 Residencia de Bacalar, we can examine in some depth the characteristics of a community that could have generated such extreme charges at higher levels of officialdom. The sixteenth-century Bacalareños were hardly gentlemen, and they turned their personal aggressions upon one another as well as upon the native population. They were a rough lot who not infrequently fought with swords and even more frequently engaged in vitriolic name-calling. Most of them were illiterate, although there were always one or two who could serve as the scribe; the crusty Antonio de Castro even claimed to be a *bachiller*. Several "stories" or "episodes" that emerged from the lengthy testimony taken in 1571 for the Residencia de Bacalar provide a picture of both daily behavior and the gossip that it stimulated. These accounts revolved around a number of thematic issues in the town's daily activities that allow us to explore in some depth what sixteenth-century life in this frontier outpost was like.

Priests and vecinos. During the sixteenth century the position of cleric in Bacalar must have been regarded as an "extreme hardship" post, as the vecinos treated clerics with disdain and animosity, some-

times literally chasing them out of town. Evidence for this animosity may be derived not only from the accounts of their treatment but also from the remarkable turnover in their assignments. In the earliest years of the villa there was no secular priest at all, and the earliest reductions were apparently carried out without the presence of any religious personnel.

Although Fray Lorenzo de Bienvenida spent some time in the villa in 1545 or 1546, we do not know what activities he pursued other than documenting the harsh mistreatment that had been applied to the native population during the 1544 conquest. Not until 1565 is there any record of a resident secular priest, and the following years demonstrate not only a rapid turnover of secular priests but also visits in 1568 and 1569 by three Franciscans (one of whom was the brother of the bishop) who had presumably participated in the entradas and reductions carried out by Juan Garzón during 1568. For the second half of the century, the following secular priests and Franciscans are known to have been in Bacalar:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Secular Priests</i>	<i>Franciscans</i>
1565	Pedro de la Costa	
1567	Juan Martínez	
1568	Juan Martínez	Fr. Francisco de Benavides
	Rodrigo Nuñez	
	Alonso Trías	
1569	Leonardo González	Fr. Martín de Barrientos
		Fr. Alonso Toral
1570	Antonio de Escobar	
	Juan Román	
1571	Alonso Martín Cotrario	
1578	Diego López	
1590	Bartolomé de Herrera	
1599	Pedro de Arroyo	

By 1616 the Sánchezes de Aguilar had managed to appoint as resident priest one of their own kinsmen, a creole named Gregorio Marín de Aguilar, who served from no later than 1616 until at least the time of the 1638 rebellion. Father Gregorio had to step aside in 1618–1619 and possibly in 1641 as well, when Franciscans were sent as special missionaries to the Belize towns. It was in reference to this beneficiado that the governor, the Marqués de Santo Floro, wrote in 1638 that he was too old to visit the remote towns and that a younger man had to be sent to assist him. The younger priest, however, had behaved so badly upon his visit to Tipu that the leaders of that Maya town had sent emissaries all the way to Mérida to complain about him to the defensor de naturales.⁶⁶

Juan Delgado Versus the Priests

In 1571 three witnesses—the scribe Luis Bautista, Bachiller Antonio de Castro, and Alonso Flores—remarked about violent words exchanged during 1568 between the alcalde Juan Delgado and the secular priest Juan Martínez. Reconstructed, these events were something like the following.

One day while Martínez was saying mass he turned to his congregation to make some announcements about the upcoming fiestas. Delgado rose from his seat with an “impetuous air” and ordered that the priest return to saying mass or else he would remove him bodily from the altar. Fr. Francisco de Benavides had to hold Delgado to prevent him from attacking Father Juan. After mass was over, Delgado went to Martínez’s house and attacked him with words that were “scandalous and indecent for his priestly dignity.”

On another occasion Delgado stopped Martínez in front of the former’s house and asked that he pay a small debt that the latter owed him from a public auction of the late Julian Franco’s personal goods; Delgado was executor of Franco’s estate. Martínez replied that he could not pay until he returned from his visita to the Indian villages (where he would presumably collect the necessary cash). An argument then broke out in which Delgado first demanded the money immediately and forbade the priest to leave town until the debt was paid. Martínez replied that he would indeed leave on his visitas even if it cost him half his beard, upon which Delgado threatened to take the case to Juan Garzón, the *teniente de gobernador*. Losing his temper, Delgado called the priest a “drunken swindler.” Martínez remained calm, telling the alcalde to “go with God” as he did not want to argue with one who carried His Majesty’s staff in his hand.

On yet another occasion Martínez ran to Alonso Flores’s house in tears, having been called a sodomite “and all the insults a man can say” by Delgado in front of the entire *cabildo*. Delgado was a notorious priest-baiter, and Martínez was not the only victim of his vitriol. He insulted Fray Alonso Toral during mass, likewise insulted Father Rodrigo Nuñez, and called Father Juan Román a devil, threatening him with his sword. Román may well have deserved his anger, however, for he had struck an Indian boy while trying to teach him the catechism.

Miguel de Paz Versus Juan Román

Five witnesses—Juan Díaz, Alonso Flores, Juan Piedra, Luis Bautista, and Antonio de Castro—all reported an encounter that took place in May 1570 between the alcalde Miguel de Paz and the priest and doctor Juan Román. The episode was said to have been sparked by two actions by Román. The first of these was his threat to excommunicate de Paz in order to prevent him from leaving the villa until he could pro-

duce the value of a *carga* of cacao that de Paz owed the church. A rumor had been circulating that de Paz intended to leave town, and Román apparently suspected that he intended to abscond with his salary income. De Paz had dismissed the threat of excommunication, claiming that Román himself had already been excommunicated by the bishop. The second action was an order issued by Román to the Spanish women not to carry palm mats to the church for an unspecified religious event, a decision that angered de Paz, who wanted his mother-in-law to carry one.

One day de Paz called together all of the town's Spanish inhabitants and demanded that they accompany him to Román's house, threatening them with fines (variously described as from 9 to 1,000 pesos!) and *suspensión de indios* (presumably deprivation of encomienda income) should they not do so. At Román's house he ordered the scribe, Luis Bautista, to order the priest to vacate the property, which belonged to the cabildo. He placed the priest under *pena de temporalidades* (signifying that he could no longer inhabit His Majesty's lands or eat the food of his vassals), suspended his salary, and discharged him from his duties as priest. He ordered him to surrender two naboría servants, a man and a woman, who lived in his house and threatened to fine the Indians 200 pesos if they gave him anything to eat. "The name of Juan Román," he said, "will be known in Mexico"—a statement of bravado that drew laughs from the crowd. Román responded by asking his servant for a coat from which he drew a staff and sword, taunting de Paz with a threat to cut off his beard if he tried to enter. Alonso Flores, the second alcalde, placed himself in front of de Paz, advising him to calm himself, stating that he wanted to break up the fracas so he could go to his farm to work. The matter soon cooled off, and the next night de Paz left Bacalar for the Golfo Dulce in some canoes. He was never seen again.

It is doubtful that many of the vecinos got along well with the priests, whose financial and moral interests often conflicted with their own. Even the Bachiller Antonio de Castro, normally a man of prudence, insulted Leonardo González by saying that he did not know how to say mass and that he "ate"—or, better, "made mincemeat of"—"the gospel." So taken aback was González that he headed back to Mérida, only to encounter along the way a messenger with orders from the bishop that he remain in the villa. Upon his arriving back in Bacalar, Castro informed him summarily "that there was one road here and another one there, and he could choose which one to take." So Father Leonardo left again, this time for good, and another priest was sent to deal with the incorrigible inhabitants.

Punishers and administrations of "justice." The alcaldes, also known by the dubious collective euphemism *justicia*, were frequently accused

of imprisoning and physically punishing both Indian servants and non-Indians, most often without bringing formal charges through due legal process. The following episodes provide examples of such behavior that appear to have been typical.

Salvador Carrillo and the Treatment of Indians

Salvador Carrillo was an impetuous young man who all witnesses agreed lacked the proper maturity and experience to govern the villa. While he was alcalde in 1570 he punished Indian men and women with impunity—his own, his relatives', and those of other vecinos.

On one occasion Diego Méndez heard loud voices inside Carrillo's house and inquired what the noise was. Indians standing in the doorway informed him that Carrillo was overseeing the whipping and cutting off of hair of an Indian woman who had run away from Carrillo's mother-in-law Beatriz de Escobar. He was reputed to administer such whippings and hair cuttings frequently, which he followed by placing the victims in stocks. On another occasion he placed in stocks an Indian mason who worked in Beatriz de Escobar's house, having accused him of sexual involvement with one of her female servants. It was later found out that he had exiled this man from the villa for ten years. This kind of behavior, in the opinion of witness Antonio de Castro, was intended more to induce fear in those whom Carrillo wished to serve him than as a means of administering justice.

The Imprisonment of Juan Rodríguez, the Portuguese

In 1569 a Portuguese inhabitant, Juan Rodríguez, wounded the alguacil Juan de Málaga in the face during a knife fight. Málaga was badly hurt and required seven or eight stitches. Immediately after the fight Rodríguez ran off and hid in the forest, only to be captured after a four- or five-day search by a party of vecinos led by one of the alcaldes, Alonso Palomo. Palomo placed the captive in the jail, where he nailed his feet in the stocks with eight horseshoes and placed irons on his legs. There he was kept prisoner for about twenty days until he escaped by inexplicably sawing the stocks in half and removing his leg irons. He then took refuge in the church for some days, where he was visited and fed by his fellow Portuguese, Bachiller Antonio de Castro, who helped him draft a formal petition for his freedom to Palomo. When Rodríguez was unsuccessful in gaining a pardon, his friend Castro helped him escape the province in a canoe.

Such examples indicate how seriously the alcaldes took their authority and how ready they were to use it. They also indicate, however, the openness of opposition to raw power in a community composed pri-

marily of social equals, even when this power was used to mistreat the native population. Even though the *alcaldes* had the right to bring formal charges against anyone in the community—Indian or non-Indian—as long as they carried the staff of office, objections were frequently expressed by noncompliance with due process and the administration of justice out of anger and self-interest.

Men and Women. It is not surprising that the activities of women—both Indian and non-Indian—in Bacalar are rarely documented; we learn about them only in relation to activities and values that men sought to dominate. Men, for example, considered economic production and distribution to be under their control, although women were deeply involved in both areas as well as in consumption—a subject that is totally absent from the record. One outstanding example provides some insight into this question of women's economic roles.

Whose Pig?

When he was *alcalde*, the infamous Salvador Carrillo sent a Black man (the only one ever in evidence in Bacalar) and an Indian man to the house of Alonso Flores with orders to take away a pig that Flores had been fattening in a corral in his yard. They were to deliver the pig to Juan Delgado, who claimed the pig as his own. Flores was not at home, and, according to Antonio de Castro, "they forced his wife to give it up to them against her will, as her husband was not at home to protest [her] charge . . . that she had raised the pig in her house and that the Indians [at her house] said they had raised it and knew it and had taken care of it by feeding it. She said that she had suffered a great injury and injustice by their taking the pig when her husband was not there."

In this case witnesses accused Carrillo of favoritism on behalf of his friend Delgado against their joint enemy Alonso Flores, who in turn was a close associate of Castro. The underlying issue, however, was a woman's right to protection by her husband in cases in which her economic interests were at stake.

In other cases involving men and women, the public issues were primarily sexual, involving Spanish men and Maya women. One case involved a man appropriately named Juan Enamorado, who claimed to have been falsely accused by the *alcalde* Alonso Palomo of sexual involvement with a Maya woman from Tamalcab. Juan Piedra, the witness to this charge, noted that there should have been no incident, as there was no claim of rape involved and as neither the woman nor her husband had lodged a complaint—only her brother-in-law had done so. This case thus indicates, by implication, that rape and incidents involv-

ing complaint by partners to a marriage were not permissible but that consensual sexual contact even with a married woman was acceptable. Palomo nonetheless had the woman arrested by an alguacil and fined Enamorado thirty *tostones*.

The most infamous case of sexual conduct on record in Bacalar involved Diego de Riveros, a man of sixty years at the time the charges against him were made. An encomendero and experienced cabildo member, Riveros was a key figure in the community but was hardly immune to the most slanderous of charges concerning his involvement with Indian women. Antonio de Castro testified that

when Diego de Riveros was alcalde and regidor he had not had sexual relations with his wife since they arrived from Castille and that inside his house he kept Indian women with whom he had sex. They are servants of his, and he jealously guards them day and night. This witness has also heard from Diego de Riveros's wife—and it is public knowledge and he has heard it from some sailors—that Diego de Riveros continuously guards his Indian women to keep them from having intercourse with other people. He has also heard Diego de Riveros's wife say that she has caught him several times with some of the women, especially a crazy one she found with him one night at an inopportune moment seated on a bed. This witness knows that because the wife considers this to be something outside their marriage she pays no attention to it.

Other witnesses claimed only that they had heard that he had one, not multiple, Indian mistresses; the principal sources of the gossip were sailors and other men who boarded in Riveros's house.

The only unusual aspect of Riveros's case was the openness with which he engaged in these activities in his home, in front of his wife and family. Although the evidence is slim, we may assume that sexual contact between Spanish men and Maya women from the community of *naborías* was common but that church marriages or permanent consensual unions between them were sought only by men of lower status.

CONCLUSIONS

Salamanca de Bacalar was a small frontier village, notwithstanding its status as an administrative center. Its inhabitants—displaced Iberians and creoles and a small number of Maya servants—had to make a living in an intensely inhospitable physical and cultural setting. What we

know about the tightly related Spanish community is biased by the colonists who described it for us—largely poorly educated individuals whose daily lives were occupied in petty conflicts and frustrated by the absence of opportunities to participate in the social and cultural world of the larger Spanish colony. These problems were exacerbated by their physical isolation from the rest of the province, so it is no surprise to discover that their vision of the larger world in which they lived and died was a limited one, and seldom recorded in the documents they produced.

The Bacalareños, like the colonial inhabitants in general, behaved toward their Maya neighbors and “subjects” as though the native population was there to be exploited for the comfort and survival of the colonists. But because such behavior was not appropriate subject matter for official dissemination, they were little concerned to report the sordid details of how they managed to extract even a meagre amount of wealth from the surrounding human and physical environment. The details that they did leave us support an impression of a tightly closed community of close kin who worked together, despite their internal status differences and factional disputes, in order to protect their principal common interest—the maintenance of their control over the native population.

As we now turn our attention to the scattered but often hostile native population that surrounded this outpost community, we can begin to see the outlines of the political, economic, and cultural institutions that bound together the Bacalareños and the native populations that these colonists attempted to govern and exploit.

4: THE MAYA FRONTIER



Among those infidels there was a large number of baptized fugitives Many knew how to read and write, and even speak Spanish, having been sacristans and *cantores* in the towns of this province. These were the more afraid, because they were the more guilty.¹

INTRODUCTION

The southeasternmost native regions of Yucatan were dramatically transformed as a result of depopulation, the colonial political economy, and efforts by the Mayas themselves to retain a measure of autonomy from Spanish rule. The continued identity of a Maya program of cultural survival must be sought in the context of those few aspects of their behavior that Spanish writers considered important enough to commit to pen and paper. There were no ethnographers of the colonial Maya frontier, and not a single document has survived the period that provides a fully satisfactory account of Maya social life, economic activity, or cultural values. Compounding the difficulties of reconstructing the outlines of native life is the fact that so much of Maya activity and thought was intentionally hidden from the eyes and ears of Spanish writers.

The scanty documents that these writers produced provide an all-too-clouded vision of an extraordinary people who resisted external colonial controls at every turn. The principal strategy of this study is to allow this vision to emerge through the narrative analysis of event, thus retaining the ethnographic description of Maya behavior in the context in which it took place. Despite the occurrence of apparent continuities in certain aspects of Maya life and beliefs, the century and a half that is chronicled in this book is a period of cultural changes and regional variations, making it difficult to present a "thumbnail sketch" of Maya frontier culture. In addition, much ethnographic information related to the Itza conquest has yet to be studied, leaving our knowledge of the early frontier colonial Mayas incomplete.

Despite these limitations, this chapter presents some of the background that is necessary to place the historical events that follow in a geographical and cultural context. I first delineate the outlines of native territorial regions on the southeastern frontier as they emerged during the colonial period, indicating how these were related to the larger political economy of the frontier population that included the villa of Salamanca de Bacalar. Regional variations in trade and production and symbolic and social forms of resistance to colonial rule are summarized. I then turn to the issue of demographic history in an effort to estimate the size, composition, and longterm trends in the population distribution of the native population. Finally, the issue of settlement strategies of the Maya population is considered in light of efforts to discover where certain—but by no means all—towns and villages were situated.

THE FATE OF THE NATIVE PROVINCES ON THE COLONIAL FRONTIER

Delineating the Native Provinces

The most significant early attempt to draw the southeastern provinces of Yucatán was that of Ralph L. Roys.² Roys spent much of his career in mapping the "political geography" of Yucatán at the time of the conquest, concluding that the peninsula had been divided into sixteen "native states" or provinces of varying degrees of political coherency and centralization. All of these except Chanputun were Yucatec-speaking, and there boundaries were to be considered as political rather than ethnic markers. Roys's boundaries have largely withstood the test of time, although it is by no means clear that a single set of criteria may be applied to define the political or cultural identity of each of the sixteen provinces. This is especially clear in the case of the Chetumal province, the southernmost of Roys's regions.

Roys's Chetumal province, which extends from Lake Bacalar to the south end of New River Lagoon, appears to be an arbitrary designation. It serves simply to distinguish one area, presumed to be administered by the hierarchy of the conquest-period town of Chetumal, from the better-established Uaymil province, which Roys suggested extended from Bacalar northward to Carrillo Puerto, incorporating the Bahía del Espíritu Santo, and to an unspecified degree to the west. There is, however, no firm evidence that much of the vast region south of the mouth of the New River was actually part of a polity that was administered from the town of Chetumal.³ Although the boundaries of the southern region are unclear, this area appears to have been part of the Dzuluinicob province,

which was unknown to Roys. Dzuluinicob extended at least as far south as the Sibun River and as far west as Tipu; its northern boundary may have extended northward to the lower New River, which was known in Spanish times as the Dzuluinicob River.⁴ Chetumal, on the other hand, appears to have been a highly localized province that incorporated only the lands in the immediate vicinity of Chetumal Bay.

The picture is complicated by the large number of northern Yucatec Maya migrants entering the Belize area throughout the colonial period, a population movement that had doubtless been going on for several centuries. These movements not only influenced the development of the region that became the Bacalar province but also the central lakes region of the Petén itself.

It was, of course, the formation of the Bacalar province, beginning with the conquests of the Pachecos in 1543–1544, that foreshadowed the construction of colonial structures against which native rebellion, apostasy, and hostile political alliances were ultimately to be directed. The formation of a colonial presence stimulated indigenous alliances that took on forms that certainly must have differed from their little-known precontact identities. This colonial-period situation, however, must be balanced against the reality of precontact political units that remained viable throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—units that combined, recombined, and accepted new indigenous elements as identities whose historical reality was rooted simultaneously in continuities from the past and in their collective opposition to European threats to their independence.

The late Sir Eric Thompson recently contributed a major statement on regionality in the central Maya lowlands, suggesting that the Yucatec-speaking "Petén Maya, the Mopán Maya, the Cehach, the Chinamita, and the Yucatec-speaking Lacandón should be constituted a subgroup, related rather closely to the Yucatec Mayas but attached with considerably looser bonds to the Putun and Chol-speaking groups to their west, south, and southeast."⁵ Thompson referred to this vast territory as the Chan Maya Region, distinguishing it from the Yucatec region north of a line drawn from Río Bec to Lake Bacalar. His use of empirical evidence makes it clear that he regarded the region as culturally distinguishable throughout the colonial period and even into the Caste War period of the nineteenth century. Further, he took the controversial stance that ancestors of the Chan Mayas, speakers of variants of Yucatec, might well have occupied the same region during Classic times."

Regarding the area of our concern, Thompson suggested that all the Mayas of central Belize were cultural brethren in colonial times. He

dubbed them the Mayas of Tipu, after the important town of that name on the Macal River and in recognition of the fact that in Spanish times Tipu was a general designation for the central and western Belize region. Though not openly including the New River settlements in the Tipu category, he pointed out that in the seventeenth century they were closely allied with the Belize River settlements. Unlike Roys, Thompson did not relegate any of these settlements to an imagined Chetumal province; he pointed out that the Putun-influenced town of Chetumal probably had control of a local "Chan" peasantry, but suggested no wider political sphere.⁷

Although stimulating, Thompson's efforts to construct a "Chan Maya region" were flawed by his preoccupation with proposed connections between the Classic and later periods; these efforts failed to take into account the historical processes of the Spanish and Independence periods that served to create so many of the frontier populations that he described. In the following sections I attempt to present a regional portrait of the colonial southeastern frontier that is more sensitive to these processes, but we must recognize that Thompson's pioneering efforts were a crucial step in reaching our present, still inadequate, understanding.⁸

Peter Gerhard's valuable recent study of the historical geography of these regions makes no effort to delineate the native boundaries, and some of his attempts to locate specific Maya towns are questionable.⁹ Like Gerhard, whose geographical reconstructions are based on colonial-period administrative boundaries, I have in the past used such terms as "Belize Missions Subregion" to designate groups of Maya communities during the Spanish period.¹⁰ In this book, however, I have moved beyond a "colonial" model of the frontier in an effort to integrate our scanty knowledge of the continuing force of native polities in the construction of the frontier colonial world.

Chetumal and Uaymil

In Chapter 2 I traced in some detail the early sixteenth-century conquest of the Chetumal and Uaymil regions, and from this account there begins to emerge a sense of their contact-period boundaries. These accounts of discovery and conquest provide our only knowledge of these provinces before they were so radically transformed by the notoriously vicious conquests of the Pachecos in 1543–1544 and the subsequent establishment of the villa of Salamanca de Bacalar.

Chetumal had supposedly been attacked by the Acalan ruler Pachimalahix, the son of a contemporary of Cortés, who imposed tribute on the town. There is weak evidence that "a Chontal turn of speech" was

found here as elsewhere along the coast of Yucatán.¹¹ The Chetumal province emerges from early accounts as a small, compact region confined primarily, it appears, to the mainland coastline of Chetumal Bay opposite Lake Bacalar. The town itself was perceived by Luján to be large, consisting of some 2,000 houses spread out along the shore in linear fashion. Like all Yucatec towns, it was surrounded by maize fields and fruit trees (including mamey and cacao), and its inhabitants produced honey in quantity. Although we can presume that Chetumal must have been an important trading center for goods moving up and down the coast and to and from points inland, both north and south, the early records provide us with little information on these activities. Chetumal, like the towns of Uaymil, had sophisticated military techniques that included the use of barricades, presumably made of wood, and defensive pits.

Other than Chetumal itself, the accounts of Luján and Dávila tell us of only one other town that might have been part of this province. This town, Chequitaquil, was three or four leagues north of Chetumal and served as a retreat for Mayas escaping Dávila's troops in 1531. By 1546, however, we discover that the leadership, and presumably part of the remaining population, of Chetumal had relocated further south at Chanlacan, which I later argue was situated around Progreso Lagoon in northern Belize.¹² Whether this relocation was voluntary or part of a forced Spanish resettlement is not known. It is probable that a large portion of the surviving Chetumal population was placed in the new encomienda towns nearest the villa, including the town of Tamalcab, which may have been immediately adjacent to or at the site of the original town of Chetumal (see Appendix). Others may have escaped southward into Dzuluinicob territory, where they were later congregated at the recalcitrant encomienda town of Chanlacan.

The Uaymil province, as we know it from these accounts, was a small region directly inland from Chetumal, confined to the area around Lake Bacalar to the Río Hondo on the south and to Yumpeten on Lake Nohbec on the north. There is little indication in the early accounts that it extended a significant distance to the west. The locations of several known Uaymil towns are discussed in the Appendix; these became encomiendas following the formation of the new villa.

The local lords of Uaymil were at first cooperative with the Spanish, suggesting that they were more than anxious to take advantage of Spanish force in ridding themselves of controls levied by Chetumal. Ultimately, of course, Dávila found himself besieged by all parties, including those of Uaymil, at his vulnerable headquarters at Villa Real, ultimately

forcing his party's ignominious retreat in 1532. Uaymil appears to have been less centralized politically and more dispersed demographically than Chetumal. Nonetheless, the principal provincial town was certainly Bacalar (Bakhalal) itself, and it was no accident that the Pachecos decided to take advantage of its local reputation and strategically protected location in establishing their new villa there.

Dzuluinicob

The northern half of Belize, which under the Spanish became the greater part of the Bacalar province, was indigenously a province of Yucatec-speakers known as Dzuluinicob. This provincial identity was retained throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which clarifies why Maya resistance retained its effectiveness over such a long sweep of history. Earlier writers were unaware of the existence of Dzuluinicob and attributed far more influence to the province of Chetumal than it now appears to have had.

Because the sole direct reference to Dzuluinicob as a provincial entity is in a unique early version of Melchor Pacheco's probanza,¹³ it would be foolhardy to venture specific claims regarding its territorial limits. I have nonetheless argued throughout this study that Tipu was the political center of this apparently extensive province, which must have included territory all the way from the Sibun River north to the lower New River. This claim is based on two principal lines of evidence. First, the identification of the New River as the Dzuluinicob (or variations thereof) throughout the seventeenth century suggests that this waterway served as the entry into this territory. And second, the strong indications that Tipu served as the principal force for the integration of Maya peoples throughout this vast region from the time of Juan Garzón's entradas of the late 1560s until the last years of the seventeenth century lead me to conclude that these political associations lasted a considerable time.

I realize, however, that this second line of reasoning is based on fragile assumptions. The circumstances of the Spanish period, which resulted in the formation of a frontier zone that I claim may have been of pre-Columbian origin, may themselves have been responsible for the alliances that we discover in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. On the other hand, this region may have had many of the same "open frontier" aspects before the Spanish conquest that were to characterize it in later times. That is, it may have long been a land of refuge for those seeking independence from centralized tributary economies or from political conflicts in northern Yucatan. A parallel case was the formation of the

Itza confederacy in the central Peten, where a new political force in exile was established in a region that must previously have been lightly populated.

La Pimienta

In Chapters 6 and 9 we learn of the presence of a vast number of independent Mayas, most of them refugees from the Sierra and from towns near Campeche, who lived on the very doorstep of the villa of Salamanca de Bacalar. This region, known as La Pimienta (from the Spanish term for allspice) during the seventeenth century, was situated to the west and southwest of Bacalar but remained well outside the reach of the Bacalareños, despite their claimed efforts to stop the tide of flight and apostacy in their immediate vicinity. The principal town of the region was called Ixpimienta.

During the 1620s and 1680s ambitious Spaniards sought to open roads through La Pimienta on to the Itzas, proposing thereby to initiate the conquest of the Itzas by pacifying the most recalcitrant of runaway (*huido*) populations between northern Yucatan and the Peten. This must have been the same region into which Juan Garzón ventured from Bacalar in 1568, where he discovered widespread apostasy among refugees even at that early date (see Chapter 2). By 1629 their numbers were estimated (perhaps grandiosely) at 20,000, most of them runaway tributary populations.¹⁴

La Pimienta appears to have been a fully regionalized population with clearly organized intercommunity hierarchies and alliances throughout the latter half of the sixteenth century and most of the seventeenth century. In all likelihood La Pimienta—by some other name—was a pre-Columbian province bounded on the east by Uaymil but with unknown neighbors on its other sides. As we discover in Chapter 6, during the early 1600s the inhabitants of the region were in touch with and influenced by the Itzas and were quite properly regarded by the Spanish as one of the major stumbling blocks in the ultimate conquest of the central Peten. Because of its remoteness from Spanish contact, however, our direct knowledge of La Pimienta is limited to a few—though detailed and intriguing—documents.

The contemporary documents make it clear that La Pimienta was considered the eastern extension of a wide band of independent refugee populations that stretched from the area south of Campeche all the way to Ixpimienta. These were known collectively during the Spanish period as the Cehach (Quehach), a term usually applied to the populations

south of the Camino Real from Mérida and Campeche toward the central Peten. In fact, the term Cehach seems to be a descriptive term for most of the southern apostate runaways who were reduced and rounded up periodically throughout the seventeenth century.

The Central Lakes of El Peten

Central to the indigenous historical reality of the southeastern frontier was the continuing influence and prestige of the so-called Itzas and their neighbors around the lakes of the central Peten. Unconquered until 1697, the Itzas and other central Peten groups comprised a spiritual and military headquarters that was recognized as a source of morale and inspiration for frontier groups that had come under more direct colonial influence. The Itzas themselves had their capital town of Tah Itza on the present island of Flores in Lake Peten Itza, but they also controlled the southern and western ends of the lake and enjoyed strong alliances with groups to the north and south.¹⁵ These alliances waxed and waned throughout the colonial period in response to external conditions created by Spanish encirclement, but the Itzas were never alone in their long and successful efforts to preserve the central Peten region from foreign conquest.

The Spanish-period Itzas claimed to be the descendants of an important Yucatecan people who had abandoned their homes in northern Yucatan and migrated to the Peten, beginning perhaps during the fifteenth century around the time of the collapse of Mayapan, but possibly as early as the thirteenth century.

Cortés's great march in 1525 from Coazacoalco to the province of Honduras through Itza territory provided the Spanish conquerors with their earliest view of the immensity of territory and vastness and variety of population of the interior Maya lowlands. From his itinerary it appears that Cortés himself was convinced that the political and economic heart of much of this territory was Tah Itza itself. His conviction was echoed throughout the colonial period by Yucatecan governors and encomenderos, who for the next 172 years made a concerted but gradual effort to weaken Itza influence throughout the region, particularly in the southern Bacalar province and in the Yucatec-speaking Cehach region north of Lake Peten Itza.

To the north of the Itzas, the conquest of the Chontal-speaking Acalan province was followed in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries by intensive mission activities in the so-called Cehach area.¹⁶ To their south, the early Dominican reductions of Verapaz were followed in the 1570s by missionization activities in the Manche Chol and Mopan

regions; these activities continued throughout the next century.¹⁷ Finally, from the north and east, the pacification and missionization of Belize by the mid-sixteenth century was followed by intense efforts as early as 1616 or 1617 to seek the conversion of the Itzas and their submission to Spanish rule. By the late seventeenth century, however, these events had led to only a partial encirclement of the central Peten lakes region, for after the rebellions of 1638 the southern Maya towns of the Bacalar province remained virtually independent from Spanish control until the very end of the century. The final conquest of the Itzas in 1697 was the last step in the gradual Spanish destruction of much of the Itza political and economic control over their formerly vast territory. As we shall learn in later chapters, the rebellious southern towns of Bacalar worked closely—although not always peacefully—with the Itzas in drawing out this long process.

The Itzas provided a symbolic and geographic focus for Maya resistance in Bacalar and elsewhere on the frontier, resistance that could not have been sustained without their influence. This influence was mythically defined by the Mayas as it was by the Spanish, who regarded the Itzas as the ultimate source of all forms of native intransigence and spiritual backsliding. To the Mayas, the Itza presence was a source of inspiration for those tempted to succumb to encroaching colonial institutions. Their priests were the source of prophecies that sometimes put fear into the hearts of rural frontier Mayas who sought to avoid periodic Itza efforts to exact obedience and loyalty from them. While the Itzas had little military strength to back up their claims, the insecurity of the frontier and the native hatred of Indian treatment under the Spanish were often enough to maintain an easy alliance that appeared to give the Itzas their political strength.

NATIVE TRADE AND PRODUCTION ON THE FRONTIER

Most of the Maya towns of southeastern Yucatan were self-sufficient producers of swidden-grown maize, beans, squash, and other horticultural products. Depending upon their location, they relied as well upon the hunting of wild animals and fishing in rivers, lakes, and the sea. Contact-period Chetumal may have been a partial exception to this rule, as its principal economic activities seem to have been the production of honey and the management of trade up and down the coast and from points inland; their subsistence foods may well have been largely imported from other communities. Fundamentally, however, the south-

eastern frontier from the time of contact through the seventeenth century was a region of food-producing, self-sufficient communities similar to those in the rest of Yucatan.

Contact-period trading activities, as noted, were particularly active around Chetumal and the Chetumal Bay area. Uaymil's lords were said to be controlled by those of Chetumal, to whom they presumably paid tribute or taxes on trade goods coming overland from northern Yucatan. The inhabitants of Bacalar also manufactured canoes "for all the Indians of that region, for their cargoes from which they live."¹⁸ In later years the inhabitants of this region remained well-known for their expertise in riverine navigation, often accompanying parties of Spaniards in their treks far into Belize. As we shall see, however, trade was by no means confined to the coastal regions.

Cacao was produced on a relatively small scale in several Uaymil-area towns during the colonial period and must have been an important part of the pre-Spanish economy as well.¹⁹ During the sixteenth century, Spaniards commissioned Maya traders from the north (from towns such as Hocaba and Yaxcaba) to carry native-produced cloth and honey to Bacalar, where it was distributed to villagers in exchange for cacao. This may well have been the continuation of a pre-Columbian form of exchange still used by the Spanish scarcely a quarter of a century after colonization.²⁰ During the seventeenth century, cacao was still produced near Bacalar at Mazanila and near the mouth of the New River. Many interior populations also produced cacao in some quantity, suggesting that neighboring regions' supplies of this important crop, which served as a form of currency and was used to make a highly valued beverage, came from these areas.

Cacao did not grow well in the central Peten, however, and the Itzas and their neighbors had to depend on importation of the product or control over subject populations who could supply them with it. When Cortés visited Can Ek at Tah Itza, the ruler claimed that he had until then recognized no superior.²¹ While it was clear that Can Ek was at war with people to the north, he nonetheless maintained strong trade relations over the entire region between the lake and the Bay of Honduras:

I told him that I sought certain Spaniards who were on the sea coast, for they were of my company and I had sent them [there] and had heard nothing about them for many days. . . . He told me that he had much news of them, for near where they had been he had certain of his subjects who served him by cultivating certain cacao plantations for which

that land was very suitable; and that from these and many traders who came and went every day from their land there he constantly received news about them²²

From Cortés's letter we may conclude that much of the Itza trade to the south was in cacao, a product highly valued by the Itza nobility throughout the Spanish period. Their southern allies apparently provided the Itzas with a supply of cacao that freed them from dependence on Chontal Acalan traders to their northwest.

The towns of the Dzuluinicob province also must have been suppliers of cacao to the central Peten, just as they served as a central node for long-distance trade in other items. The most distinctive feature of the Dzuluinicob province during colonial times was its riverine environment and the fact that nearly all of its Maya settlements were located on the banks of rivers and streams. On the one hand this ecological setting provided a principal motivation for the Spanish to regard Dzuluinicob as a strategic entry zone for the ultimate pacification of the Itzas. Tipu, after all, could be reached by canoe from Bacalar, landing any party of missionaries or soldiers within relatively short distance from Tah Itza. Furthermore, the towns were easily accessible for purposes of tribute collection or for other forms of payment to Spaniards at Bacalar. On the other hand, the riverine towns were themselves in an excellent position to engage in independent trade between the Peten and Bacalar and between the upper Belize River area, La Pimienta, and from there on to northern Yucatan.

In addition to the production of cultivated cacao, the environmental circumstances of the small riverine towns of the Dzuluinicob province encouraged them to engage in the collection of wild vanilla (which flavored the chocolate drink) and the cultivation of *achiote* (anatto, a red seed for the flavoring of various foods). The sources for riverine cacao production were many, but as early as 1582 the bishop of Yucatan, Fray Gregorio de Montalvo, noted that though the towns of the Bacalar province were tiny (each with four or six vecinos) and widely scattered, he recommended against reducing them to central communities because such an action would force them to abandon their cacao plantings. Although this remark also would have applied to the towns of the old Uaymil province, his subsequent information on the towns of the Belize and Xibun rivers suggests that he was thinking primarily of Dzuluinicob.²³

Referring to the town of Lucu on the Belize River, López de Cogolludo reported that Fray Bartolomé de Fuensalida saw there in 1618

"much achiote, which is the best to be found in New Spain, much thick cacao that turns reddish-brown and tastes good by itself, and vanilla beans that they call *cizbiques*, which are very good and fragrant for the chocolate. It was a very pleasant town and was blessed with cacao orchards along the river bank."²⁴ In the same year Fuensalida discovered that at Tipu the *maestro de capilla*, a refugee from Hecelchakan, had planted a reported 8,000 cacao trees.²⁵

I have argued previously that the success of this region's activities in cacao production during the colonial period were linked to the early declines in cacao cultivation in the Acalan region and the Verapaz.²⁶ Dzuluinicob cacao probably continued to supply the Itzas, who were deprived of their earlier sources, with this valuable product, which was also presumably shipped to Yucatan via independent Maya trade networks.

Dzuluinicob's colonial-period trading activities with the Itzas, which were centered at the principal town of Tipu, extended well beyond cacao, however. Several years ago I wrote:

In addition, the Itzá traded woven clothing made from their own cotton and dyes with the inhabitants of the Tipu area, from whom it was reported that they received axes and machetes.²⁷ That manufactured iron tools were in considerable demand in the central lakes sub-region is indicated by reports that on the eve of the 1697 conquest, axes, machetes, and knives (as well as salt and various trinkets) were presented by the Spanish as gifts to the Itzá. In addition, Itzás hired as road builders were also to be paid in machetes and axes.²⁸ Such regular Spanish contact was of a very late date, however, and it is likely that the Tipu planter-traders, whose contacts with northern Yucatecan sources were well established, were major suppliers of manufactured tools to the Itzá and their neighbors for much of the colonial period. It should be recalled in this context that the Maya god Ek Chaua was the patron of merchants and the god of cacao;²⁹ to these beneficiaries Scholes and Roys also added cacao planters.³⁰ Ek Chaua's responsibilities in Belize must have been especially heavy.³¹

The sources of iron tools for Tipuan traders are not known, but it is likely that they were primarily blacksmiths working in Maya villages further north on the peninsula. Unfortunately, we still lack sufficient information about what goods Tipu had to offer the northern traders who supplied them with the iron goods they transshipped to the Peten interior, nor do we know very much about specific trade goods received at Tipu from the Itzas. We can only surmise that, like La Pimienta (discussed below), the Belize River towns supplied these traders—in addi-

tion to Itza embroidered cloth, cacao beans, achiote, and vanilla—various forest products that were in demand in areas of the northern provinces where repartimiento demands for these goods could not be met locally. These would have included honey, beeswax, and copal—products that could be supplied from the Central Lakes region of the Peten as well as from villages in Belize.

There remains the additional possibility that ceremonial artifacts, in particular the anthropomorphic ritual censers called “idols” by the Spanish, were supplied in quantity by the inhabitants of the central Peten and that the people of Tipu distributed these to various external regions, including northern Yucatan. The distribution and manufacturing centers of these censers and other ceramic ritual objects, which were probably produced by various colonial-period frontier populations, has not yet been well analyzed archaeologically.³²

Referring to activities in the frontier regions during his own lifetime, López de Cogolludo wrote, “One has to admire it when one realizes that those of this province communicate with [the “infidels”] regularly, carrying machetes, axes, salt, and other things that they do not have there and bartering for wax and other things that they have there.”³³ Such descriptions were particularly applicable to activities in the Pimienta area, whose population was derived principally from the towns of the Sierra and from a group of communities around Hecelchakan, near Campeche. Traders from these areas, especially the Hecelchakan region, regularly plied the paths to Ixpimienta through Hopelchen, bartering wax for salt and metal tools (see Chapter 6). The wax cakes produced in these forest communities, as suggested above, were probably destined for northern Mayas who needed them to pay their repartimiento debts. Maya priest-leaders, who had also migrated from northern towns, engaged in syncretized religious ceremonies that included the physical trappings of the Christian priesthood. These leaders appear to have controlled much of this trade in addition to religious and political activity.

Not enough is known of these production and trade activities to address in detail the degree to which they changed over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Certainly, as argued earlier, the gradual Spanish encirclement of the entire southern frontier did disrupt the ability of the core populations in the Peten to control long-distance trading routes, apparently opening the way for regional populations in La Pimienta and Dzuluinicob to increase their own effectiveness as producers and traders of goods in demand both at Tah Itza and in northern Yucatan.

The new patterns of trade and production, which seem to have main-

tained much the same form throughout the first century and a half of the Spanish period, were also a product of the colonial political economy in yet another sense. Those Mayas who moved to the frontier were not only running away from excessive tribute and taxation demands but were also seeking new economic opportunities. On the frontier, the new refugees found an open market for various products that were in demand as a result of the tributary economy, especially the forest products that Spaniards demanded of villages in the noncotton-producing areas along the southern fringes of the northern encomienda zones. This demand increased as more individuals fled to the southern frontier, leaving the encomienda towns less and less capable of meeting whatever quotas were required of them. Ironically, then, the more pressure the colonists placed upon their subjects, the more likely these were to relocate beyond Spanish control in order to take advantage of trade demands caused by shortfalls in tribute and repartimiento production. Such a situation was at the very core of a vicious cycle that included economic exploitation, increased flight, resultant village disease and hunger, and ultimately Spanish reduction forays into the forests in order to recoup runaways and to break up the trading systems that connected the frontier with the colonially administered towns.

Cycle upon cycle, manifesting these variables in differing degrees, orders of magnitude, and overlapping sequences of event, this drama was repeated many times over throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The tributary economy changed little in its overall form during this period, and the colonists, unable to break the sequences of population movement and forced return, were thus powerless to destroy the frontier systems that actually rendered it possible for so many individuals to survive the rigors of that intolerable economy. Therefore, among the few significant long-term changes that we can discern in these patterned cycles are those of degree and frequency. In part because the pattern of movement of people and goods back and forth across the frontier was fundamentally a reaction to a static and non-productive colonial tribute economy, we find even events separated by many decades to be repeating themselves again and again. The principal sources of long-term change were finally to come from *outside* this system, not only from native theories of history as prophetic fulfillment and from Spanish officials anxious for recognition and reward, but also from the increasing costs demanded of the colonial economy by the defense of the peninsula from the international piracy of the seventeenth century.

THE CULTURE OF RESISTANCE

Some rebel leaders of the frontier and their followers wore their hair long and sometimes donned a long smock to distinguish them from the Christianized Mayas of the encomienda towns.³⁴ But others, calling themselves *ah k'inob*, or priests, sometimes wore garments based upon those of Christian bishops. The symbols of dress as well as the forms of ritual and the methods of political control throughout the frontier were a vivid and fluctuating mixture of Spanish and Maya tradition. The frontier world was a place of dynamic cultural syncretism, of the creative use of two cultural traditions in order to achieve social and political unity in the liminal environment that straddled the worlds of the colonizer and the Maya rebel.

In the chapters that follow we will look at this world through the events that demonstrate the resistant posture of frontier Maya society and culture. We are told, for example, of a hotbed of apostates at Ixpimienta who were ruled by opportunistic Maya priests who mocked the Church in their dress and ritual, who played the forbidden ritual drums, and who used flint daggers in their ceremonies. Yet when the Spanish troops arrived at the town on Good Friday, they found the population waving palm fronds in a collective expression of Christian ritual unity. These same Mayas later murdered their Spanish visitors (who had carried out some unpopular methods of exploitation over the next months), humiliating the bodies of the deceased in ways that were derived from both Spanish and Maya traditional practice.

In the earliest years Maya rebels preserved tradition in hieroglyphic books, but by the late 1500s most of these had been destroyed by the Spaniards. In their place appeared religious books and secular letters written in European script but in the Maya language. Not many Mayas could read these, but we can be certain that they were circulated widely throughout the southeastern regions as well as in northern Yucatan. Many of the citizens of the frontier were educated and semieducated Mayas who hoped to make a new life for themselves in a land of freedom and economic opportunity, and these were among the most dangerous sources of potential opposition to the colony.

Some of these individuals, trained as religious assistants and called, variously, *maestros cantores* (choirmasters), *maestros de capilla* (chapel masters), or simply *maestros*, had been discovered in "idolatrous" activities and had simply run for their lives to faraway places such as Tipu and Ixpimienta.³⁵ As Farriss has pointed out, these individuals were given

powerful responsibilities by the clergy as teachers of catechism to the young, as scribes, and even as substitutes for the priest at times of baptism and burial. Many of them were members of the surviving Maya nobility, serving as repositories of knowledge held by the *ah k'inob*.³⁶ Such individuals on the frontier, even in colonially "controlled" towns such as Tipu, were probably the most active potential sources of anti-Spanish resistance. While seemingly cooperative in church matters on one of the occasional visits of the Bacalar priest, they could be responsible for hiding "idols" used in rituals in the Maya style only a few doors away from the church, almost under the cleric's nose.

Like the *maestros* of towns like Tipu, the *principales*, or native elites, were sometimes also of dubious loyalty. When visited by a Spanish priest these men, some of whom were descendants of Maya elites from northern Yucatan, succeeded in impressing the observer with their cultivation, good manners, and apparent cooperative attitude:

Among the Indians of Tipu there was one main principal named D. Francisco Cumux, who was descendent from the lord of the island of Cozumel, who was received by D. Fernando Cortés when he was on his way to the conquest of New Spain. The account [of Fray Bartolomé de Fuensalida] says that his nobility and good blood, even though Indian, came through in the courtesy and affability with which he treated the religious. He was a great supporter of the church, for which he was a great singer [cantor] and musician. . . . He sent his children to the religious in order that they teach them in the schools, and for many years, although now not so often, sang in the choruses as if he were an ordinary Indian.³⁷

While Cumux apparently cooperated with the visiting friars at Tipu in 1618 and 1619, we cannot know for certain that he was not influential—as were other town leaders—in the upsurge of "idolatry" there in 1619. During the 1638 rebellion at Tipu there are no reports of any town leaders who were supportive of the Spanish cause. This is not to say that the elites of the colonial native towns were always opposed to Spanish interests, as there are several accounts of pro-Spanish leaders, particularly in San Juan Extramuros and other settlements near Bacalar, who sometimes risked their lives for the interests of the crown and church. In general, however, distance from the villa increased the likelihood of recalcitrance or open resistance on the part of native leaders.

The elite-macehual (commoner) distinction was clear at Tipu, where, in addition to Francisco Cumux, Fuensalida also described a wealthy cacao planter—a refugee from whom Hecelchakan had sufficient influence

to hire workers to plant his 8,000 trees.³⁸ This man, like many Maya elites, was also a former maestro de capilla. Although we cannot be certain of the importance of elite principales in Iximienta, the important role there of native priest-leaders whose origins were in the colonial Maya towns makes it likely that these too were former maestros from elite families. Outside the major frontier towns of Tipu and Ixpimienta and the barrio of San Juan Extramuros, however, there is no indication of this degree of social hierarchy following the earliest years of the colony. Presumably, the reason that Spanish officials were so ready to blame the leaders of Tipu and San Juan for any hint of disturbance was their knowledge of the influence and suspicion of the disloyalty of the principales in these communities.

All of the colonially administered native communities had at least a nominal cabildo, modelled to some extent upon the cabildos of the Spanish villas. Such cabildos were supposed to comprise, in addition to a gobernador (sometimes called cacique), two alcaldes and four regidores.³⁹ Each year these individuals were expected to travel to Mérida to seek the governor's confirmation of their "elections." It is impossible, however, to know how strictly any of these requirements were met in the Bacalar province. Most of the Maya towns do appear to have had alcaldes, but there is no record of regidores except at Pacha, which was part of the villa of Bacalar in later years.⁴⁰ Only at Tipu is there a record of a gobernador/cacique, and the term *batab*, commonly used in Yucatan to refer to the gobernador, is entirely absent from the documentation on the Bacalar province. It is probable that outside Tipu and San Juan Extramuros (and later Pacha) the cabildo officials were not required to make the confirmation trip to Mérida.

At Ixpimienta, the only independent frontier community for which we have such information, community government was in the hands of four priest-leaders, all of whom had migrated from colonial towns in Yucatan (see Chapter 6). The number four may have signified a four-ward organization along pre-Columbian lines, but there is little basis for such speculation. Once towns such as Ixpimienta were "reduced," it appears that the same leaders were transformed into the community's new cabildo, taking on the roles of gobernador, alcalde, and regidor.

THE MAYA POPULATION OF THE COLONIAL SOUTHEASTERN FRONTIER

Although J. Eric S. Thompson made a valiant effort to support a reasonable case for vast population declines in the Southern Maya Low-

lands following European conquest, there exists little direct ethno-historical evidence for precontact populations.⁴¹ Statements by Fray Lorenzo de Bienvenida regarding the numbers involved in the Pacheco conquest and by Dávila and Luján on the density of population in the Uaymil and Chetumal provinces certainly do give pause to anyone who would claim that the southeastern provinces were lightly populated at the time of contact (see Chapter 2). In fact, it would be counter to our knowledge of other New World regions to make the assumption that contact-period populations were small.

What we do know with some degree of certainty is that by the late sixteenth century the actual number of counted tributaries in the Bacalar province was exceedingly small. Save for the remarkably high numbers suggested for La Pimienta (discussed above), we have no direct evidence that indicates a vast uncounted population. That a sizable uncounted number did exist in certain areas other than the central Peten and La Pimienta may be a reasonable proposition, but such a suggestion must be considered speculative.

Disease factors in this region must have been somewhat different than in areas further north in the peninsula, especially due to the endemic nature of malaria, which appears frequently by the seventeenth century in reference to the Spanish population. Chronic malaria, in combination with the epidemic cycles that periodically devastated northern Yucatan, must have resulted in early deaths of much of the adult population.⁴² Such a combination of factors may well explain why, despite references to continuing migrations of Maya populations from the north to these areas, the total tributary populations did not grow significantly over the colonial period.

The following paragraphs summarize what we can presently reconstruct from known evidence on the actual tributary populations in the Bacalar province. I begin with a case study that demonstrates the difficulties that this task presents.

Mazanila: A Case Study in Population Reconstruction

One of the only Maya towns for which we have detailed tribute records for an extended period is the crown pueblo of Mazanila, which may well have been the same town known at the time of Dávila's 1531 entrada as Mazanahau and which remained on an eighteenth-century map as Guazam. This settlement—one of the few in the Bacalar province to pay its tributes in cacao rather than money—was probably located near Bacalar on Chac Creek near the Río Hondo (see below).⁴³ We can presume that it was a successful producer of exportable cacao, only a por-

tion of which was paid in direct tribute; the rest would have been sold directly to markets in Yucatan to the north.

From these records we can attempt to reconstruct the settlement's population history during the early seventeenth century. We discover in this case study a small community with an apparently stable population that was presumably maintained due to its economic success as well as to its proximity to the town to Bacalar and the watchful eyes of the neighboring Spanish community.

A study of the royal accounts of Yucatan indicates that Mazanila's tribute in cargass of cacao was probably instituted before 1603, when the available records begin.⁴⁴ Two-thirds of the sale value of this cacao was retained by the villa; of the remaining third, nine-tenths was forwarded to the royal officials in Mérida and one-tenth was paid in diezmos to the cathedral. The figures provided in the royal accounts should, of course, be treated with caution, as they indicate that reassessments were seldom made despite certain changes in the local population.

In 1606 the total tribute of the crown encomienda of Mazanila was 6.5 cargass (6 cargass, 30 zontles), with a value of 325 pesos at 50 pesos per carga (see Table 4.1).⁴⁵ The accounts indicate, however, that cacao in Bacalar almost never commanded the exorbitant price of 50 pesos per carga. The wealthier Spanish Bacalareños who were able to purchase it paid from 20 to 36 pesos per carga, and in most years the price was under 25 pesos. From Bacalar they shipped it on to markets in the northern provinces.

In 1613 the tribute of Mazanila rose to 7.8 cargass (7 cargass 48 zontles), suggesting a slight rise in population. This assessment remained in effect through 1618, when the accountants ceased listing the tribute value in cacao. After that date until 1632, when Mazanila disappeared entirely from the record, the sale value of Mazanila's tributes, except in 1631, declined somewhat, suggesting either a drop in the price of cacao or a slight downward reassessment of the tribute due to declining population.⁴⁶ The brief upswing in population in 1631 might have been due to reductions pursued that year in Belize (see Chapter 5).

In Tabasco one tributary paid 10 zontles (one-sixth of a carga) annually as his tribute in about 1620.⁴⁷ Because the total value of the Mazanila tribute is divisible by twelve, not ten, however, it appears that the individual tribute there must have been 12 (one-fifth of a carga).⁴⁸ Applying this rent to Mazanila, the tributary population of that town would have been 33 from 1606 to 1612 and 36 from 1613 to 1620 (and possibly as late as 1632). García Bernal's conversion factor of 3.425⁴⁹ suggests a total population of 113 for the earlier period and 123 for the later one.

TABLE 4.1. Reconstructed Tributes and Population of Mazanila, 1603–1632

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Cacao</i>	<i>Crown Tercio (incl. diezmo)</i>	<i>Market Value</i>	<i>Total Value</i>	<i>Tribu- taries (12 z. per tributary)</i>	<i>Recon- structed Popu- lation</i>
1603				144 p.		
1604						
1605				236 p.		
1606	6 c. 36 z.	2 c. 12 z.	50 p.	325 p.	33	113
1607						
1608	6 c. 36 z.	2 c. 12 z.	20 p.	130 p.	33	113
1609	6 c. 36 z.	2 c. 12 z.	20 p.	130 p.	33	113
1610	6 c. 36 z.	2 c. 12 z.	20 p.	130 p.	33	113
1611	6 c. 36 z.	2 c. 12 z.	20 p.	130 p.	33	113
1612	6 c. 36 z.	2 c. 12 z.	25 p.	164 p.	33	113
1613	7 c. 48 z.	2 c. 36 z.	26 p.	203 p.	39	123
1614	7 c. 48 z.	2 c. 36 z.	20.5 p.	160 p.	39	123
1615	7 c. 48 z.	2 c. 36 z.	23 p.	179 p.	39	123
1616	7 c. 48 z.	2 c. 36 z.	24 p.	187 p.	39	123
1617	7 c. 48 z.	2 c. 36 z.	28 p.	218 p.	39	123
1618	7 c. 48 z.	2 c. 36 z.	22 p.	172 p.	39	123
1619						
1620						
1621				124 p.		
1622						
1623						
1624						
1625						
1626				113 p.		
1627						
1628						
1629						
1630						
1631				177 p.		
1632				113 p.		

Source: AGI, Contaduría 911, 912, 913, and 914.

Note: The reconstructed population is based on a conversion factor of 3.425.

Abbreviations: c = cargas; z = zontles (60 per carga); p = pesos.

Although these figures confirm that Mazanila was a small community, they are larger than those reported in an account of the payments made to Gregorio Marín de Aguilar, the secular priest of Bacalar. In this account, which covered the years from 1616 to 1621, the number of tributaries for Mazanila (for which he was annually paid two reales per tributary) ranged between ten and thirteen.⁵⁰ A later account of payments made to Father Gregorio from 1632 through 1636 indicated that in Mazanila and San Juan Extramuros there were only twenty-eight tributaries in these two communities.

This discrepancy could suggest that the tributes in cacao were in gross excess of the actual population of Mazanila or, alternatively, that the cabildo did not pay the priests the full value that they were due from the tributary count. The latter is the more likely explanation, given the other official sources of income available to the Bacalar priests. In 1598 a trial-court notary public in Mérida had noted that only in Bacalar were the diezmos used to contribute to the stipend of the priest.⁵¹ This was in fact a very unusual situation, as diezmos were seldom used to pay the parish priest anywhere in Spanish America. He received a salary from the crown in addition, which in all must have been considered sufficient for his support.

The cabildo, of course, had every reason to collect as much rent as possible from the crown encomiendas of Mazanila and San Juan Extramuros. The population figures derived from the tribute accounts may therefore be slightly excessive, but it seems unlikely that they are far over the community's actual population size.

Mazanila and San Juan Extramuros

In Chapter 3 I attempted to reconstruct the Indian population of the Bacalar barrio of San Juan Extramuros (see Table 3.2). Combining information from that reconstruction, it is possible to reconstruct for one decade in the early seventeenth century an estimated total Maya population for Mazanila and San Juan Extramuros, the Indian populations most closely associated with Salamanca de Bacalar (see Table 4.2).

It is interesting to compare these two similar estimated populations for their differing reactions to the reductions of 1615, which resulted in a large population increase at San Juan Extramuros that year but in no change at all at Mazanila. Because the tribute at Mazanila was apparently tied to official counts for these years, we see only one slight increase in population in 1613, apparently due to a reassessment. It is likely that reduced Mayas were not resettled at Mazanila as they were at

TABLE 4.2. Combined Population Estimates for San Juan Extramuros and Mazanila, 1609–1618

<i>Year</i>	<i>Estimated Population San Juan</i>	<i>Estimated Population Mazanila</i>	<i>Combined Estimated Population</i>
1609	151	113	264
1611	147	113	260
1612	134	113	247
1613	123	123	246
1614	130	123	253
1615	243	123	366
1616	134	123	257
1617	134	123	257
1618	134	123	257

Note: This table compiles estimated data from Table 3.2 and Table 4.1.

San Juan and nearby Tamalcab. Mazanila was apparently allowed to retain a measure of independence and autonomy as a result of its economic status as a source of constant income from cacao tributes.

Tipu

In contrast to the relative stability of the populations of Mazanila and San Juan Extramuros, we discover that Tipu, far distant from the villa of Bacalar, experienced wide fluctuations in population throughout the seventeenth century.

The earliest population estimate of Tipu was made by Fray Bartolomé de Fuensalida, who estimated its vecino or tributary population in 1618 to be about 100,⁵² suggesting (at a conservative 3.425 per tributary) a population of about 343. In the years immediately following, however, the town’s active population declined precipitously due to flight.

In 1622 Tipu was part of the combined encomienda of Petentzuc, Zaczuz, and Tipu. Petentzuc and Zaczuz were located on the upper Belize River below the Macal branch where Tipu was located. The annual rent of this encomienda was 35 *mantas* at the rate of 4 *casados* (married men) per manta (for a total rent of 350 pesos at 10 pesos per manta), suggesting a total tributary population of only 8.75 tributaries or a total estimated population of thirty people. As absurd as this figure may appear, the document in question notes that these towns “have been being reduced from the forests” and that the new encomendero would be authorized to carry out a *retasación*, or recount, of the population for tribute

purposes. From this information, then, it appears that after the friars Fuensalida and Orbita left Tipu in 1619 the better part of the population of Tipu and its neighbors had fled the towns and that a major new reduction was underway during 1622.⁵³

This reduction was completed by 1623, when about 80 Tipuans, presumably all adult males, assisted Fray Diego Delgado and three Spanish soldiers by carrying their baggage to Tah Itza. There the Tipuans were all reportedly killed, reducing the population of that town by about 80 males.⁵⁴ If the population had returned to its 1618 figure, this would have left about 263. These events are described in Chapter 6.

By 1643, following the rebellion that began in 1638 (see Chapters 7 and 8), the population of Tipu had swelled to an estimated 300 families due to the reduction of *huidos* at the town—by the rebel leaders themselves—from all over the Bacalar province.⁵⁵ In that year, then, the population of Tipu would have been somewhat more than 1,000 persons.

In 1655 a *matrícula* was taken at Chunukum, downstream from Tipu on the Belize River. This census, which is discussed in Chapter 8, was by no means complete, as the census takers were not allowed to visit Tipu itself but were allowed to count only those individuals who made the journey to Chunukum.⁵⁶ The results of the census, which are summarized in Table 8.1, indicate that 314 Tipuans and at least 127 individuals from other towns were counted, totalling 441 or more persons of all ages. Those from the other towns were almost all residents in the environs of Tipu, where presumably they had moved during the late 1630s or early 1640s. One might estimate that at least half of the population residing at Tipu failed to make the trip. It is consequently possible that the 1,000 or so persons at Tipu in 1643 were still resident there in 1655.

Sometime between 1678 and 1680, under conditions described in Chapter 9, Franciscans, apparently accompanied by soldiers, visited Tipu, where they reportedly baptised more than 600 individuals of all ages.⁵⁷ Assuming that at least 100 of those who had participated in the 1638 rebellion forty years earlier were still living in the community, and that most of those had been previously baptized, a rough guess for the town's population at this time would be around 700 persons. In the intervening years since 1655, a number of individuals might have left Tipu to resettle in their original communities, reducing the size and influence of Tipu itself.

By 1696, as discussed in Chapter 9, kinship and political ties between Tipu and Tah Itza had reached a high point, and a number of Tipuans had established residence in Yalain, an Itza-affiliated town east of Lake Peten Itza. As a result, the town's population dropped still further to an

TABLE 4.3. Estimated Population of Tipu, 1618–1697

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population</i>
1618	340
1622	30
1623	340
1643	1,100
1655	1,000
1680	700
1697	400

Sources: For 1618, López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 7; 1622, AGI, Contaduría 913; 1623, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 10, Ch. 2; 1643, AGI, México 369, Bishop of Yucatan to Crown, 5 March 1643; 1655, AGI, México 158, Matrícula of Chunukum, 6 Nov. 1655; 1680, AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 321A, pieza 3, Residencia del general Don Antonio de Layseca Alavarado, 1683; 1697, AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 1, no. 11, Martín de Ursúa y Arismendi to Gabriel Sánchez de Berrospe, 12 June 1697.

Note: Tipu’s population would have been reduced to about 260 following the 1623 massacre of eighty Tipuans at Tah Itza. Population reconstructions are based on a conversion factor, where appropriate, of 3.425.

estimated 400 in 1697, immediately following the Itza conquest. By this time Tipu was said to be composed of two adjacent communities—one called Tipu and the other, Baltok.⁵⁸

On the basis of these unsatisfactory data, then, Tipu’s population history for the seventeenth century was something like that shown in Table 4.3. These figures underscore the difficulties in arriving at any estimate of total Indian population for the Bacalar province, as the population remained highly mobile and thus essentially “uncountable” for so much of the period. The declines in population at a particular location such as Tipu were not indicative of declines in total population but only in the population of localized centers. Likewise, the rises in population at such locations were indicative of resettlement at new communities. But from such data we can appreciate the highly volatile nature of one community’s population history, underscoring the importance of local migration from town to town and from town to forest.

Estimates of the Maya Population of the Bacalar Province

Table 4.4 summarizes the few available colonial estimates of the province’s total population from 1582 to 1643, distinguishing where possible between individuals considered “loyal” to the crown and the total population. The “loyal” Mayas were, of course, the several hundred who were retained in the vicinity of the villa during and after the 1638 rebel-

lion described in Chapter 7. Some of these were "permanent" residents at Mazanila and San Juan Extramuros. Others were reduced to the area around Bacalar from trouble-making communities such as Lamanai, which as early as 1637 was identified as an encomienda vacancy composed of "runaway Indians" who had apparently already been moved to Tamalcab.⁵⁹

Despite some variation, the total figures are remarkably consistent over this sixty-one-year period, especially if we take into consideration that the source of the low 1582 estimate recognized that many Indians remained uncounted in the forests. The totals also make sense in light of the estimated combined populations of Tipu and the known populations of Mazanila and San Juan Extramuros, taking into account modest additional numbers on the order of several hundred additional persons from other villages in the province.

Nonetheless, it must be recognized that the 1,000 to 1,500 or so Indians that were counted as members of tribute-paying or recognized rebel villages were almost certainly not the total Maya population of the province. Many must have remained uncounted throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and perhaps an equal number or even more were living in communities deep in the forest that were not under colonial control. It is impossible to document such individuals and communities, however, so we must remain content to recognize that the total tribute-paying base of the Bacalar province probably never exceeded 1,500 or 1,600—a remarkably low figure that conforms to the poverty of the villa as described in the documents and as discussed in Chapter 3.

THE LOCATION OF MAYA TOWNS

The following section discusses in general terms the patterns by which Maya settlements were distributed throughout the Bacalar province, including La Pimienta. The reader who wishes to discover the more specific results of locational analysis should consult the Appendix, in which the research strategies for locating a number of communities are discussed. Otherwise, Maps 1 and 2 will allow readers to follow the text of the chapters that follow without this detailed knowledge.

The Nature of the Sources

Information about the location of Maya towns is found primarily in reports of entradas and of attempts to reassemble Maya runaways into

TABLE 4.4. Colonial Estimates of Indian Population of Bacalar Province, 1582–1643

Year	All Tributaries	All Loyal Tributaries	Total Est. Population	Est. Loyal Population
1582 ^a	250		856	
1605 ^b	400		1,370	
1609 ^c	600		1,503	
1638 ^d	300	100	1,028	343
1639 ^e				777
1643 ^f	450	150	1,541	514
1643 ^g		184		630

Sources:

^aAGI, México 374, Memorial by Bishop Fray Gregorio de Montalvo, 1582, in Scholes et al. *Documentos para la historia de Yucatán*, vol. 2, p. 81. The bishop recognized that the total Indian population was greater than the “fewer than” 250 tributaries that he estimated, “because that province is very scant due to deaths and to its closeness to very large forests to which they flee from their tributes and the doctrine, returning even to their rites and idolatries.” He stated that the towns were widely scattered with only four or six *vecinos* in each.

^bAGI, México 369, Bishop Diego Vásquez de Mercado to Crown, 12 December 1605.

^cVásquez de Espinosa, *Compendio y descripción de las Indias Occidentales*, pp. 89–92, cited in García Bernal, *Población y encomienda*, p. 86.

^dAGI, México 360, Governor to Crown, 10 July 1638. The governor reported that “fewer than” 200 of the total were at this date allied with Tipu and therefore not under crown control. This was likely an optimistic estimate.

^eCárdenas Valencia, *Relación historial*, p. 95. Cárdenas Valencia estimated that there were 900 persons of all ages in the Bacalar province when he wrote in 1639, including Spaniards and Indians. I have subtracted 123 estimated Spaniards from the total of 900 (see Table 3.1). Although he included Tipu in his remarks about the province, I have assumed that this estimate refers to the post-1638 rebellion situation. The low figure is difficult to interpret, as it is too low for the total population while being too high for the “loyal” population. It is most likely that he was simply recognizing the loss of many tribute payers from the population of previous years and proceeded to guess a likely remaining loyal population of about half the earlier tributary population.

^fAGI, México 369. Bishop of Yucatan to Crown, 5 March 1643. 300 nonloyal families were congregated at Tipu.

^gLópez de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 7, Ch. 6. Based on 460 pesos of tribute for the Bacalar province and on the assumption (perhaps incorrect) that this payment was calculated in mantas (in which case each manta was valued at ten pesos and equalled the tribute payment of four casados).

Note: Total population estimates are based on a conversion factor of 3.425 except for 1609. The 1609 figure is derived from Vásquez’s estimate of 600 “indios considerados personas de confesión . . . ,” to which I have applied García Bernal’s suggested conversion figure of 1.67 in arriving at the total.

their old or relocated villages. Such reports were written by such persons as Spanish cabildo officials, military men, and missionaries, many of whom were aided by witnesses called upon to support their claims of valor in the form of sworn probanzas of merits and services. Their descriptive language is generally telegraphic in style, lacking in descriptive nuance or detail, e.g., "such and such a town is located on the water's edge," or "we reached it after marching twelve leagues in the other direction across marshes and impenetrable forest." We have been spoiled by the elegance and precision of Fuensalida's memoirs, even when these are filtered through the summarizing will of his chronicler López de Cogolludo.⁶⁰ Fuensalida, an old man when he wrote of his journeys up the New River to the havens of iniquity at Tipu and Tah Itza, had the luxury of time to remember small details. Most reports, however, were written "in the field" or in a courtroom by inexperienced writers who were in a hurry to file a report—sometimes of dubious accuracy.

It is usually necessary to compile several individual reports about a single place before a picture emerges. Even then, evidence on precise location is so scarce that our success rate is limited. We may be fairly certain that a town is along a thirty-km stretch of the Belize River or somewhere on the coast between the mouth of the Río Hondo and the Sibun River; however, such vagueness is not much of a guide to the ethnohistorian or archaeologist attempting to find the town on the ground or to locate it on a modern map. Sometimes contemporary maps provide important clues, and these, in combination with documentary sources, can be invaluable. They can be misleading and confusing, however, as when Lamanai is shown as an island and Chetumal is located near Lake Ixabal.⁶¹ In order to demonstrate how such combinations of sources can provide potentially useful data, however, I shall summarize below how they were used to provide tentative locations of several of the most important Maya towns of the Bacalar province.

Settlement Types

Most of the known Maya towns of the Bacalar province were all visita missions under Salamanca de Bacalar's administration; of these, most paid encomienda tribute to the vecinos of Bacalar, either directly or to their agents. Most of them were apparently ancient pre-Columbian towns, but others appear to have been new "reduction" communities formed by forcibly collecting Maya runaways into locations along the coastline (such as Zacatan) to attend to passing traders and sailors. Reductions, however, also took place at old towns (such as Tamalcab, Tipu,

and Lamanai), and towns that were known as reduction centers (the "model villages" of Spanish Belize) probably had earlier histories as well.

Towns differed in size, although we know little about specific populations. They also differed in economic specialization. Some were devoted to coastal trade, fishing, and maritime occupations. Others were primarily involved in cacao production and internal trade. Some were of major political importance, such as Tipu, located on the boundary between two spheres of regional power; others were too tiny and isolated to be of any importance. Complicating these sources of variation was the mobility of the population, caused both by traditional internal processes of movement and by forms of forced resettlement. Sometimes entire towns picked up and left of their own accord, and sometimes they were moved as more or less intact units to new locations called by the same name. As one might imagine, such movement of populations can make identification of precise locations a difficult task.

The historian Nancy M. Farriss has treated the issue of population movement for colonial-period northern Yucatan in considerable depth, and we can certainly see the processes that she identifies at work on the southern frontiers as well.⁶² *Flight*, the process by which large numbers of Mayas migrated to regions beyond the orbit of Spanish control, was, of course, the most important of these forms of population movement. This process and its effects on the long-term inability of the Spanish to govern the southern lowlands is the central subject of the present study and need not be discussed in greater detail here.

Drift, although a less dramatic form of population movement, also had a major impact on population distribution in Yucatan:

A large portion, perhaps most, of the Maya who left their communities chose not to escape from colonial domination; they simply moved to another community within the pacified zone. These much more conservative moves within the same shared universe seem so aimless that they warrant the title of "drift." They are among the more mystifying phenomena of colonial Maya history.⁶³

Attempting to explain why so many individuals in Yucatan chose to change their town of residence in this seemingly arbitrary form of population movement, Farriss observes that "Aside from the very general two-directional movement toward and away from the colony's center, we have yet to find any larger pattern in the drift phenomenon. There seems to have been no incentive for the particular choices of new homes other than distance from creditors and possibly the presence of kinsmen."⁶⁴

The extent to which drift characterized the frontier Mayas cannot be

known, as there are no records documenting individual population movement. Given the openness of the frontier communities and the general lack of documented Spanish efforts to maintain precise records of community membership, we can presume that many individuals moved freely from settlement to settlement—at least among those communities outside the immediate vicinity of Bacalar. These individuals would have had little motivation to avoid tribute or other collectors, however, unless they moved to settlements completely beyond effective Spanish jurisdiction. Whatever drift-like movement occurred, then, would have been as a result of marriage decisions, desires to be closer to certain kin, or new economic opportunities.

More important on the frontier than drift was the periodic movement of people to the vicinity around Tipu as a result of Maya efforts to centralize the population of the Bacalar province. Such a movement occurred during the late 1630s and early 1640s as a result of successful Maya attempts to wrest control of the Tipu region from the Spaniards at Bacalar (see Chapter 7). This pattern of population movement was the obverse of the Spanish practice of reduction or congregation and may have had some of the same nonvoluntary aspects as the colonial version of population centralization.

Farriss's third category of population movement, that of *dispersal*, refers to the process of community fragmentation—the reverse of Spanish programs of congregation—by which families and individuals move from congregated towns to rural hamlets. These hamlets eventually grow into new towns, beginning the process all over again. In the case of more densely settled areas of Yucatan, the pattern resulted in new communities surrounding the old one, whereas in areas adjacent to the frontier, it produced linear patterns of settlement along trails that reached into the forest.⁶⁵ We see in Chapter 9 an example of the latter process in the movement of people from the Oxkutzcab region of the Sierra into the Pimienta area, demonstrating that this form of dispersal was in reality the first stage of more committed decisions to flee colonial control altogether.

The circular form of dispersal, which was particularly adapted to regions under tight colonial control and situations in which new lands close to the original community needed to be exploited, was probably not practiced in most areas of the Bacalar province. There settlement patterns conformed more to the suitability of an area to support cacao production, the area's access to waterways and trade routes, and—in the case of Tipu—its strategic position vis-à-vis interior, unconquered frontier populations.

Locational Strategies

The question of what strategies were applied in finding or continuing a particular location is a complex one, as it is not always clear whose strategy—Maya or Spanish or both—was being applied in deciding where a Maya settlement should be. In general, it would appear that remoteness from Bacalar may have been an expression of the successful desire for isolation, whereas proximity to the villa would imply stronger control by the Spanish.

Under normal, peaceful circumstances, nearly all Maya towns in Belize were located on or near the water, particularly on coastal and interior saltwater lagoons, major rivers, and lakes. Such locations provided ease of trade and communication and access to primary economic activities, e.g., cacao production above the riverbanks considerable distances upstream and maritime activities on protected estuaries along the coast.

It was certainly no accident that these towns were almost all located conveniently for the passage back and forth of Spanish personnel (including priests, encomenderos, and traders), various mestizos and mulatos in the service of Spaniards, and such Maya functionaries as traders, priests, and town officers (who had to travel to Mérida regularly for confirmation). Their relatively easy accessibility—although it took several days to reach Tipu from Bacalar—makes us wonder how many more Maya towns there must have been in more remote locations, on smaller rivers further upstream from the main branches. During the 1630s, in fact, there was a change in overall locational strategy in favor of movement to more inaccessible locations southward toward the Tipu region, in order to avoid forced resettlement nearer Bacalar and perhaps to avoid capture by pirates.

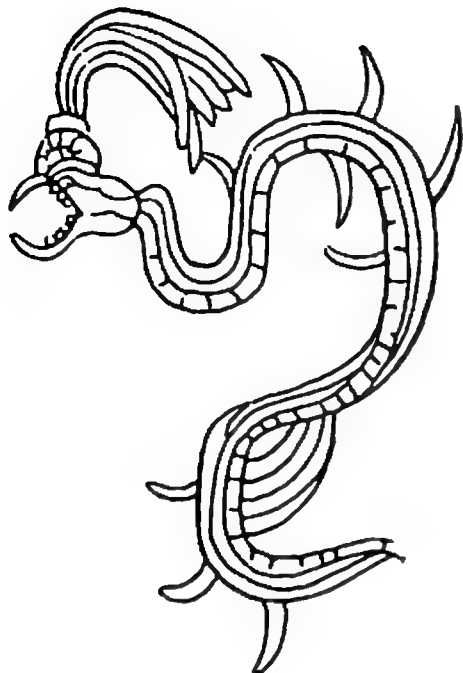
PROLOGUE TO A FRONTIER DRAMA

In the chapters that follow this background information will come to life in an excursion through reconstructed space. Events will emerge that return us to the ideas introduced at the outset of this book. We shall discover through the unfolding of events the themes of population movement through flight and reduction; of native historical event constructed by politically motivated cultural conventions; of passive and active resistance by indigenous populations against weak colonial control; of long-distance underground native activities in the realms of material and informational exchange; and of kinship as a means of integrating the native populations of the frontier.

We will also discover that the frontier was a dynamic place that con-

nected the native world of the colonized Yucatan to the north with the genuinely independent Maya world of the Itzas of the Peten. The frontier was eminently liminal space, a region "between" fully independent zones and the colonized Mayas. Because of this spatial liminality, the frontier fell between temporal cracks as well, shifting back and forth between periods of accommodation to colonial rule and periods of outright rebellion. What appears to have held all of this together was the peculiarly Maya theory of time and history. Events that to the unaware observer appear as the arbitrary unfolding of secular events were forced into cycles and in fact became part of a cultural order of predetermined history. Had the colonial world of the frontier not been so fragile, such expressions of culturally constructed time would not have been possible among a people who were so few and so weak. But on the frontier, a place almost always on the edge of chaos and disorganization, Maya history had the full opportunity to realize its potential.

5: KATUN 3 AHAU: RECONQUEST AND RESISTANCE



The hour for the conversion and salvation of that people must not have arrived . . . , and what I believe is that [they] live so badly and barbarously that God has set them aside to be “firebrands for Hell.”¹

As the years passed the frequency and intensity of native resistance on the southeastern frontiers of Yucatan increased markedly. At root a protracted struggle to withdraw to free and independent zones far from the rigors of the triumvirate institutions of *encomienda*, *repartimiento*, and mission, much of this resistance constituted a process of separatism and avoidance of Spanish control. It was not just an underground of seething discontent, however, as it sometimes broke out into murderous violence that frightened all Spaniards and drove them in turn to retaliate with violence and further repression. Underlying Maya violence and resistance was the message that the colony would be tolerated as long as independent Maya polities beyond a restricted zone of Spanish control were permitted a considerable degree of political and religious autonomy.

Native resistance demanded colonial tolerance of another world of Maya activity. By and large this tolerance was grudgingly provided, but ultimately the price to be paid—particularly in the loss of labor power caused by flight from working *encomiendas*—was deemed too great, and Spanish authorities began to plan for the ultimate conquest of all independent Maya territories. These plans may have begun as early as 1616 or 1617, but so great was native resistance that Tah Itza² on Lake Peten Itza—the ultimate heartland of all Maya independence movements—was not conquered until 1697.³ The intervening years witnessed a series of extensive anti-Spanish movements, one climax of which was a resistance movement centered at Tipu in western Belize in

1638 that all but duplicated many of the characteristics of the resistance movements of 1568 that were discussed in Chapter 2.

The "process of resistance" was orchestrated on the frontier itself by religious-political leaders who, we now know, legitimized their influence over their followers through regular interpretation and communication of katun prophecies. Although we have only the slightest direct access to their exhortations, the circumstantial evidence for the importance of the katun cycles as a justification for political action is overwhelming. I hope to demonstrate this claim in this and the following two chapters by means of a close analysis of the circumstances under which Maya-Spanish conflict on the frontier arose.

These chapters consider three phases of Maya-Spanish interaction that resulted in the resistance movements of 1638. First to be considered are the events that led to a remarkable visit by Itza emissaries to Mérida in 1616 or 1617, on the eve of the opening of Katun 3 Ahau. On this visit, it was claimed, the Itzas declared their willingness to submit peacefully to Spanish rule over Tah Itza. Following the Itza emissary, the secular and religious officials of Yucatan sent Franciscan missionaries via Tipu in 1618 to explore further with Can Ek and other Maya leaders of Tah Itza the terms under which political control of the Itza heartland would be transferred to the crown and its priestly representatives.

The outcome of these discussions was unsatisfactory, as political conflicts within the Itza hierarchy over the interpretation of the Katun 3 Ahau prophecies prevented Can Ek from acting decisively in support of Spanish designs. These conflicts were undoubtedly compounded by the overzealous behavior of Fray Juan de Orbita, one of the Franciscan representatives to Tah Itza. By the time the Franciscans had departed from their second visit to the Itza capital, it was obvious to all concerned that all hope for peaceful Itza capitulation had been dashed. "Idolatry" movements had broken out at Tipu in 1619, and the missionaries left the region having accomplished nothing more than an intensification of anti-Spanish sentiment among the frontier Mayas. The stage, in fact, had been set for the abortive military solution and the violent encounters between Spaniards and Mayas that are described in Chapter 6 and, ultimately, for the widespread resistance movements and collapse of the Bacalar province discussed in Chapter 7.

EARLY DESIGNS ON THE ITZAS

The early years of the seventeenth century witnessed several efforts to bring under control some of the encomienda fugitives of northern Yu-

catan who were living on the far-flung frontiers of the peninsula. These efforts indicate increasing Spanish frustration with the problem of flight, although none of them enjoyed long-term success. None possessed the organizational scope of Juan Garzón's remarkable triple entradas of 1568. Their limitations were due in part to the competing military demands that the frequent attacks of foreign corsairs required of the Yucatecan exchequer. They do indicate a growing recognition of the "Itza problem," however—the recognition that only the final conquest of Tah Itza would bring to an end the flood of runaways from the northern encomiendas. They also demonstrate an improved sense of colonial planning that would evolve over the years into a resurgence of large-scale entradas that climaxed with the 1697 Itza conquest.

The Bahía de la Ascensión: Road to the Itzas

One example of these early efforts to reconquer the frontier was Ambrosio de Argüelles's abortive reduction of the Bahía de la Ascensión.⁴ In 1595 Governor Alonso Ordóñez de Nevares gave Argüelles of Valladolid permission to pacify at his own cost the area around the Bahía de la Ascensión. Although Argüelles was given permission to make an entrada into the Indian pueblos and to explore the area, he was unable to mount the expedition until in 1601 Governor Diego Fernández de Velasco provided him with an agreement that specified how much his soldiers could expect to gain from the conquered areas. This agreement gave him permission to recruit people from Valladolid, Campeche, and Bacalar and relocate the reduced Indians in several settlements of unspecified location. Half of the Indians would be given in encomienda to Argüelles, a fourth to the participating military officers, and a fourth to soldiers chosen by Argüelles.

López de Cogolludo, reading from this agreement, gave the following rationale for the ambitious undertaking:

And if the region of the Bahía de la Ascensión had been pacified, it would have been possible to continue on and go to the region of the Itzas, which is on the mainland on this province between the Bahía and Verapaz and Tabasco. They could enter into the region and reduce them because they were so pernicious in their area, not only living in infidelity and idolatry themselves but also protecting many baptized ones who have run away from this province and participate in their rites and gentile ceremonies, and place them under encomienda according to the aforementioned stipulation.

The hoped-for conquest of the Itzas, then, was the ultimate justification of Argüelles's entrada.

With this agreement in hand, Argüelles was able to gather enough support to outfit an expedition. He purchased a

seaworthy frigate which he fitted with all the necessary arms, gunpowder, and ammunition, hatchets, and machetes for clearing trails. Because he was going with the intention of exploring all those coasts and bringing back accounts of them, he bought a large launch, four canoes which he made into two *falcas* in order to maneuver all the little inlets and which would also serve for getting to the land.

In February of 1602 Argüelles and his men set out, but they did not get very far. Off the point of Cabo Catoche they encountered an English ship that ordered them to surrender. A battle ensued, and the Spaniards lost. Their ship was sunk, and they returned—somehow—to Mérida “very poor and disheartened.”

Early Missionary Efforts on the Itza Frontiers

France V. Scholes and Ralph L. Roys have provided a detailed account of the efforts to establish and maintain the so-called *montaña* (forest) missions in the interior of the peninsula between 1604 and 1615, recognizing their importance for the larger Spanish designs on the Itzas of the central Peten.⁵ Their account, based on detailed readings of the Paxbolon-Maldonado papers from the Archivo General de Indias is important and should be consulted by the reader who wishes to understand more about the precursors to the events covered in this and subsequent chapters.⁶ The circumstances of these missions will only be summarized briefly here.

According to López de Cogolludo, during the period between 1595 and 1601, while the Argüelles expedition was waiting to begin, word circulated throughout the Maya communities about an imminent reduction.⁷ The Maya inhabitants of Sacalum on the southern frontier feared that if the reduction around the Bahía de la Ascensión were successful, the Spaniards would next turn to their own area. At that point they would have had nowhere to run, as the eastern section would have already been pacified. The inhabitants of Sacalum were typical of those throughout the frontier region:

Among those infidels there was a large number of baptized fugitives, who in order to live with the freedom that the others permitted them had gone over to them. Many knew how to read and write, and even

speaking Spanish from having been sacristans and cantores in the towns of this province, which caused them greater fear because they were the more guilty.⁸

Scholes and Roys discovered that the frontier Mayas had ample reason to fear impending reductions, as in 1599 Gregorio de Funes, the chief procurador of Yucatan, had petitioned the Council of the Indies for a reduction of fugitives living in the southern territories to "'open country' where they could be kept under surveillance and taught Christian doctrine."⁹ The Council later instructed Governor Velasco to attend to this problem, which he did by appointing Funes to pursue an armed *entrada*. Like Argüelles's plan, however, that of Funes never materialized.

In 1604 five Campechanos, including Francisco Maldonado, reached an agreement with Velasco to pacify the fugitive towns, but in 1603 Don Pablo Paxbolon, the cacique of Tixchel, had already been sent on a reconnaissance mission to the interior Cehach towns on a road toward Tah Itza. Much like all later proposals to pacify pagan interior towns, this one would lay the groundwork for the opening of roads to the south, including Verapaz, and for the conquest of the Itzas. Although the *entrada* was to be nonviolent, accompanied by Franciscan friars, any captured Indians would, after a four-year period of tribute exemption, be granted in *encomienda* to Maldonado and his associates.

López de Cogolludo reported that in order to escape capture and punishment by impending reductions the Mayas of Sacalum decided to send nine representatives to Fray Juan de Santa María, who then served at the convent at Campeche. Santa María apparently claimed that on this visit they asked him to deliver a message to the governor and bishop requesting a Franciscan missionary who would catechize them and baptize the non-Christians among them. "Their" request—masterminded by Santa María—was granted by 1604, and Santa María was given the license as *comisario* to carry out the mission.¹⁰

In fact, Scholes and Roys learned that Santa María had earlier circulated a letter condemning the upcoming Maldonado reductions among the fugitive towns. In this letter Santa María claimed that the Spaniards intended only to impose tribute, and he pleaded with the Mayas to request his services as their missionary in order to forestall military action. News of the letter passed quickly throughout the forest towns. The first reduction was greeted with moderate cooperation, and several new missions were founded by the Franciscans who accompanied this expedition.

Eventually a group of fugitive Mayas did visit Santa María, who accompanied them with a petition to the new governor in Mérida, in which they requested missionaries unaccompanied by soldiers. The outcome of the petition was a joint decree by the governor and various church leaders that the pacification effort would be turned over to four Franciscan friars. A protracted dispute among government, church, and soldiers followed in which Fray Juan de Santa María emerged victorious as one of the four Franciscan missionaries chosen to serve in the forest settlements without military escort.

Over the next months Santa María and his companions established a reduction mission at Ichbalche and visited the Cehach town of Tzuctok, four days south of Ichbalche toward Lake Peten Itza. He had hoped to press even more deeply into Cehach and Itza territory, but the new governor, Carlos de Luna y Arellano, forbade him to go beyond the towns of apostate runaways from the north. Royal decrees issued in 1599 and 1601 had forbidden either military or religious entradas into the heathen interior, and a sick and disappointed Santa María left his new missions to return to northern Yucatan in late 1605.¹¹ Scholes and Roys suggest on weak evidence that in 1606 new missions were established by the Franciscans at Tzuctok and Chacuitzil (and at visitas at Sacalum, Petcah, and Auatayn).¹² López de Cogolludo maintained, on the other hand, that as comisario in 1604 Santa María had himself traveled throughout a vast area and managed to reduce and resettle three "provinces," including Sacalum, Ichbalche, and Chunchaz (or Chunchaas).¹³

Sacalum was the most remote of these missions and the one closest to Salamanca de Bacalar, located in the infamous and rebellious frontier region known as La Pimienta. Not surprisingly in view of its location, Sacalum soon fell into abeyance as an effective Franciscan outpost. Fray Juan de Santa María was succeeded there by Fray Joseph del Bosque by 1612,¹⁴ and in 1615 Maya officials of Sacalum, along with those of the missions of Ichbalche, Ichmachich, and Tzuctok, listened to Franciscan proposals for a general congregación of all of these towns near the Chontal mission of Chanpoton on the coast south of Campeche.

The site eventually chosen for this congregación was Sahcabchen, located much further inland, but there is no evidence that anyone from Sacalum ever moved there.¹⁵ In 1622 Sacalum became the military headquarters of a party of Spaniards whose expressed intention was to pursue the overthrow of the Itza polity itself. The reestablishment of Sacalum as an armed *presidio*, whose Spanish and Maya guardians were massacred en masse in 1624, will be discussed in Chapter 6. The sketchy interim history of this mission, located in the infamous and rebellious

frontier region known as La Pimienta, will be discussed further in light of these later events. Here it is important only to emphasize that the early efforts to missionize and reduce this region were a bellwether of later Spanish efforts to pursue both religious and military conquest activities in the Itza heartland. Such efforts were next turned toward the Bacalar province.

THE "RECONQUEST" OF DZULUINICOB

Reduction efforts similar to those of the missions of las montañas were pursued near Bacalar as early as 1604. The secular priest Antonio de Arroyo reported in his probanza of that year that he had participated in reductions carried out from a base at Chancénote near Valladolid with the assistance of Juan Chan, the governor of that town. These reductions reached at least as far as Chunchuhub along the road between Bacalar and Peto.¹⁶ Shortly thereafter reductions must have been carried out from Bacalar itself, as the value of tributes from the crown encomienda town of Mazanila (or Mazanahau) rose nearly fivefold from a value in 1605 of just over 71 pesos to 325 pesos in 1606.¹⁷ In 1608 yet another reduction around the Bahía de la Ascensión was carried out by Fray Gaspar de Sosa, resulting in the formation of the reduction mission of San Francisco de Oyal. This mission was small, consisting of only 106 persons of all ages.¹⁸

The wake of all these reductions was felt with particular strength in Bacalar, where in 1609 rumors emerged that a Maya attack on the villa was imminent. On March 16 of that year the cabildo members of Bacalar wrote to Governor Luna y Arellano requesting arms and asking that their absentee encomenderos in Valladolid return to participate in preparations for the attack. The source of information was one Andrés Pech, who had confessed that a group of recently reduced Indians from the Campeche area—obviously from the mission towns reduced by Fray Juan de Santa María and his companions—were planning their attack on Holy Thursday. (It was a common Spanish fear that attacks would come during the processions of Holy Week.) Pech had lived at Bacalar until twelve years earlier and had himself been at Tzuctok six months before his confession; he was apparently considered to be the organizer of the upcoming attack. He reported that the hostile party had already attacked Tzuctok and a town called Chimun, where they had killed two Spaniards and forty Indians in the company of Fray Francisco Matías, who had assisted Fray Juan de Santa María in the establishment of the missions of the montañas. Fray Francisco had been left for dead in the en-

counter, but it was later learned that he had survived.¹⁹ Although the cabildo of Mérida sent a rescue party of six soldiers and several Bacalar encomenderos from Valladolid, nothing ever came of this rumor. The governor reported back to Bacalar that the report was false, and he opined that it was unlikely Pech would have so much control over the far-distant "people of the Itzas."²⁰

Throughout this period it is evident that Bacalar's control over its own hinterland was in a state of near collapse. Knowing now that their own Maya inhabitants were in close contact with hostile parties as far away as Tzuctok, the absentee encomenderos of Bacalar began to take steps to firm up their control over the more distant towns in the province, in particular those in the direction of Tipu.

In 1615 one of these encomenderos, Juan Sánchez de Aguilar, as *alcalde ordinario* carried out a reduction in the Belize River area near Tipu, creating the reduction towns of Petentzub and Zaczuz.²¹ We learn from another source that Tipu itself had been among three towns, including Petentzub and Zaczuz, that had first been reduced sometime around 1608 and were still in the process of being reduced. In 1622, when these and other reductions were finally organized as a new *encomienda*, they turned out to be small communities with a total of only 136 *casados*.²²

This rash of small-scale reductions in the region of Tipu suggests that flight from the *encomienda* towns of the southern Bacalar province had reached unmanageable proportions by about 1608. There can be little doubt that this episode of Maya resistance was related to the rise in frontier reductions all the way from the Cehach region through La Pimienta to a point as far east as the Bahía de la Ascensión. It is thus at first glance something of a surprise to learn that in about 1617 the moral center of all Maya resistance—Tah Itza—embarked on a mission to capitulate to Spanish control.

THE ITZA EMISSARY TO MERIDA

Victoria Bricker recently brought to our attention the fact that a group of Itzas went to Mérida, presumably in 1614, to declare their submission to the crown.²³ The principal Spanish source for this visit was López de Cogolludo, who wrote in about 1659 that

The Itza Indians . . . came to the city of Mérida during the time of this governor. They said that they came to submit themselves to the king, in whose name the governor presented them with *alcaldes'* staffs of office

and named a council. This being done they went back, it being understood that they had voluntarily become subjects. This, however, was later seen to be a deception.²⁴

Villagutierre, who wrote many years after the event, assigned a date of 1614 for the Itza visit to Mérida.²⁵ A careful reading of his text, however, indicates that he had invented this date. His own source, López de Cogolludo, stated only that the Itzas' visit to Mérida occurred during the term of governor Antonio de Figueroa, who governed Yucatan from March 1612 until September 1617.

The Itza visit had been reported as early as 1633 in a garbled account by the Franciscan historian Bernardo de Lizana, who was apparently López de Cogolludo's source.²⁶ He wrote of the visit in the context of the life history of Fray Juan de Orbita, an impulsively devout Franciscan who had visited Tipu and Tah Itza with Fray Bartolomé de Fuensalida in 1618. Lizana wrote:

This holy religious had already visited Taiza on another occasion [before 1618]. He had been there two days, was given an excellent reception, and convinced them to offer their vassalage to the king our lord, in whose name he appointed the very same king Can Ek as governor or cacique. He also gave *alcaldes'* staffs to two Indian *principales* and formed a council and all the rest necessary for the república. All were contented.²⁷

Orbita and his companion apparently thereupon returned with 150 inhabitants of Tah Itza to Mérida, where they presented a report of their successes to the Franciscan prelate and to the governor and bishop. The news was well received, and the governor confirmed the appointments they had made, encouraging them to continue their work. Just what went wrong later is not made clear by Lizana, who only laments that "The hour for the conversion and salvation of that people must not have arrived . . . , and what I believe is that [they] live so badly and barbarously that God has set them aside to be 'firebrands for Hell.'"²⁸ We might read into this passage Lizana's understanding that the Itza visit to Mérida was in response to one Itza faction's interpretation of a prophecy that the Itza would accept Christianity and Spanish rule at the end of Katun 5 Ahau, which was to occur in 1618.

Lizana reported that Orbita was a native of Arcila and had grown up in the villa of Torrijos in the kingdom of Toledo. He had come to Yucatan in 1615 in the company of Fray Francisco Fernández and Fray Diego

Porras and had quickly applied himself to learning Maya "scientifically."²⁹ If the date of his arrival in Yucatan is correct, he could not possibly have visited the Itzas until 1616 or, more likely, 1617. It now becomes apparent why Fuensalida and Orbita visited Tah Itza yet again in 1618—they were simply following up on their mandate to pursue the complete conversion of the Itzas as they were instructed by Governor Figueroa. It was surely no accident that Orbita had chosen the time when the katun was about to change for his first visit, nor could it have been chance that his follow-up visit with Fuensalida was timed to coincide with the opening of Katun 3 Ahau.

Bricker suggested that passages in the Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin that pertain to the year 1611, toward the end of Katun 5 Ahau, refer directly to the Itza visit to Mérida and to their ignominious return to Tah Itza, where the representatives may have been seized and beaten.³⁰ According to Edmonson's free interpretation of these obscure passages, there may have been conflict at this time between pro-Christian and anti-Christian factions at Tah Itza. This is a fascinating possibility, although I must admit to some skepticism concerning Edmonson's interpretation—and certainly the visit did not occur as early as 1611.

That this visit did occur, probably in 1616 or 1617, is quite certain. It was covered up "in the press," so to speak, for reasons that are not clear. I have been able to find no primary source documentation for an event that must have been considered of major importance—not even a mention of it in correspondence from the governor. Why the visit was considered by López de Cogolludo and Lizana to have been an immediate failure is also not clear, because there is no evidence of Itza hostility or refusal to accept missionaries from Yucatan. An almost identical event, to be described in Chapter 8, occurred again in 1695, when a delegation from Tah Itza again visited Mérida through Tipu, precipitating a major split in the Itza confederacy at that time and resulting in similar claims by the Spanish that the visit had been a hoax. This visit too was timed to coincide with the end of a katun (Katun 10 Ahau, which was to end in 1696 or 1697), and like the earlier event it was followed by abortive Franciscan efforts to secure voluntary submission and ultimately by plans to take Tah Itza by military conquest. The second time around, however, Spanish forces succeeded in their mission whereas, as we shall see, the earlier attempt ended in disaster.

This earlier visit was a key event in that it contained the seeds of ideologically motivated political ferment—both at Tah Itza and Mérida—to which all the later events that we shall examine were ultimately answerable.

THE FRANCISCAN MISSION TO TIPU AND TAH ITZA

We are indebted to López de Cogolludo for his detailed coverage of the Fray Juan de Orbita's return to Tah Itza, via Tipu, with his companion Fray Bartolomé de Fuensalida. The two friars actually visited Tah Itza twice, in 1618 and 1619, and the details that López de Cogolludo extracted from Fuensalida's memories of these experiences, which he wrote many years later in 1648, are among the finest examples of ethnohistorical detail available for colonial Yucatan.³¹ Although I intend to publish elsewhere a full translation of this early visit along with López de Cogolludo's interpretation of Fuensalida's account of his 1642 return to the Bacalar province, a number of details deserve our consideration here.

The Appointment of the Missionaries

Orbita and Fuensalida were chosen for their mission to the Itzas at the Franciscan provincial chapter meeting held in Mérida on March 25, 1618. Governor Figueroa, like his predecessors, had been denied Council permission to undertake an armed entrada to Tah Itza. The Franciscans were overjoyed to receive cédulas encouraging them to undertake the Itza mission without military escort—cédulas that have not yet been found but that must have been issued after Orbita's initial visit to Tah Itza. The two friars received their patent from the newly elected *provincial*, Fray Juan de Acevedo, and presented it to the bishop, Fray Gonzalo de Salazar, in the hope that

with his blessing and consent their entrada might be better equipped and that he would give them his commission and license to stay in the town of Tipu, the former being in the province of Bacalar, the last town in that mission that is subject to the *beneficiado* [secular clergyman] of the villa of Salamanca. They would have to stop to prepare for the entrada there, and the *beneficiado* would have to understand that they were to reside there and not impede his pious undertaking.³²

They carried with them the bishop's commission, which ordered the secular priest of Bacalar, Gregorio Marín de Aguilar, not to visit Tipu and its surrounding area while they were there and to turn over to them the rights to administer sacraments "as if they were his own priests." Likewise, the Indians were to grant them rights to perform funerals, baptisms, and marriages in Aguilar's place.

They were disappointed not to receive the assistance first promised

by Governor Francisco Ramírez Briceño. Although the governor had received cédulas from Felipe III requiring the provincial government to support their religious expenses and travel costs, he blithely ignored this requirement, assuming "that they were going like the apostles, walking barefoot and with no more assurance than that of divine mercy." He even failed to provide them with promised letters requiring that the Indians of Tipu provide them with supplies and guides for their trip to Tah Itza. As a result, the friars had to delay their departure while they solicited donations.

The Mission's Departure from Mérida

Fuensalida and Orbita eventually left Mérida in mid-April 1618 loaded with church supplies and gifts for the Mayas: crosses, knives, needles, and other Spanish goods from the bishop; rosary and glass beads from former Governor Figueroa; these and other items from various vecinos; a chalice, vestments, white raiments, and other items for the mass from the provincial; a crucifix from the cathedral treasurer; religious paintings for the church from the cathedral officials; and alms for the purchase of ritual and church adornment from various vecinos as well as the cathedral officials. As they traveled through the province on their way to Bacalar:

Even the souls of the Indians are said to have been moved. In the towns through which they passed the Indian principales and women gave them clothing like that which they use as well as other familiar items of the finest quality so that they might give these to Can Ek, their king and to his wife and the other Indian principales. This gift took on special value and meaning after all [the rest] was given.

The governor's failure to support the friars became a sore point as time passed. Upon leaving Mérida they stopped at the estancia of Miguel de Argaiz, who had invited the governor to a large fiesta, soliciting him once again for his support. Ramírez instructed them to go on to Tekax and wait there for the vouchers that would require the Mayas to provide them with supplies and guides; these he would send on to them at Tekax. After waiting several days at Tekax, the friars finally received a letter from the governor informing them that he had decided not to issue the vouchers because he had no royal orders to provide them and that he did not want to take responsibility for the possible eventuality that they might be killed by the Itzas or their guides. They would have to proceed, he said, under the sole patent of the bishop.

Fuensalida and Orbita were deeply worried that they had no letters from the governor to show either the people of Bacalar or those of Tipu, who they feared would refuse to guide and accompany them on to Tah Itza. This concern may have stimulated the friars to recruit a number of Maya cantores and sacristans from the Sierra convents around Tekax. These, in López de Cogolludo's colorful prose:

voluntarily offered to accompany the religious, [doing so] even though they knew the dangers of the trip, as they went alone without human defense, putting themselves in the hands of those barbarous infidels, who, they were definitely aware, eat human flesh. But He who is powerful enough to make Abraham's children out of stones was powerful enough to conquer the fear of accompanying the religious.³³

With their ritual paraphernalia and assistants finally assembled, this party, whose numbers are unrecorded, finally left Tekax and headed eastward through Peto and on to Calotmul. From there the road turned southward to Chunhuhub, fifteen leagues into the wilderness, passing unattended travelers' hostels on the lakes and aguadas along the way. The next fifteen leagues between Chunhuhub and Pacha was marshy even in the dry season during which they were travelling—so much so that one area was known as U Bakel Tzimin, or Horse Bones, due to the many horses who became enmired and died in the mud.

They found the town of Xoca, ten leagues beyond Pacha, completely deserted "without a trace of houses or a church, all covered over by a mountain of foliage that is a shame to see."

Five leagues further on they reached Bacalar and discovered that the priest, Gregorio Marín de Aguilar, was out visiting other towns in his parish. The friars were housed by the alcalde, Andrés Carrillo de Pernia, in the large thatched buildings that served as casas reales. Carrillo, like most of the Bacalar encomenderos of this period, was a vecino of Valladolid. He took advantage of their plans to travel to Tipu by deciding to accompany them there and, as we shall see, to carry out his own fine-collecting visita along the way. Although his hospitality and provision of paddlers and supplies for the friars and the Indians who accompanied them was recalled affectionately by Fuensalida, his personal interests must certainly have influenced his decision to assist the mission.

At a later point in the account we learn that the friars were disadvantaged at Bacalar by not having official letters from the governor. Some of Bacalar's inhabitants opposed their mission and discouraged the local

Mayas from assisting them. Father Gregorio and his unnamed secular partner had even traveled all the way to Mérida to request the friars' recall. In the end, however, the bishop (himself a Franciscan) supported the friars and threatened to recall Father Gregorio himself until they returned.³⁴

The Road to Tipu

At the beginning of May the friars, the Indians, their paddlers, and the alcalde set out across Lake Bacalar on the journey to Tipu. They followed the southern passage to the Río Hondo (then known as the Noh Ukum) before reaching Chetumal Bay. From the mouth of the Noh Ukum they paddled three leagues to rest at a Bacalareño's estancia at the ancient site of Chetumal, probably at or near Tamalcab (see Appendix). From there they went to the deserted town of Uatibal on Laguna Seca east of the mouth of the New River and then began their passage up the New River (then known as Dzuluinicob). Along this river they passed the three towns of Punquy, Zonail, and Holpatin, apparently in that order, before reaching Lamanai on the northwestern shore of New River Lagoon. Unfortunately, López de Cogolludo's rendering of Fuensalida's account tells us nothing about any of these places other than the richness of the aquatic life of the river and lagoon.

From the shores of the New River Lagoon they walked across an extensive *pinal*, or "pine ridge," before reaching Labouring Creek (then known by the Spanish as the Cancanilla), which was crossed during the dry season by fording a submerged natural bridge.³⁵ Six leagues beyond they reached the town of Lucu on the banks of the Belize River, where they were received "lovingly and calmly." Lucu produced excellent achiote ("the best to be found in Nueva España"), cacao, and vanilla. The cacao was cultivated in orchards along the riverbanks. The river provided fish and turtles, and the men of Lucu were expert paddlers, "raised since childhood in that occupation and exercise."

The travellers hired some of these paddlers to carry them upstream against strong currents. In twelve leagues they crossed 190 rapids, each with its own Maya name. Fuensalida was deeply impressed by the river, whose medicinal, natural, and physical properties he described at length.

Tipu, The Spiritual Garrison

After three days they made the approach to Tipu, "the last town of this government and of Christians, a spiritual garrison, destined to remain there as long as would be necessary for the conversion of those

infidels." They were met two leagues below the town by Tipu's cacique Don Cristóbal Na and the town's *alcaldes* and *principales*, who greeted them with the maize and cacao beverage called *saka'*. Once at Tipu, the party was entertained with dances. A ceremony of prayers was later held in the church, whose patron, we learn, was San Pedro. The friars were lodged in the house of the secular priest, located next to the church. The *alcalde* of Bacalar was put up in the house of Doña Isabel Pech, who was described as a principal of the town and the widow of a former cacique named Don Luis Mazun, "who had died in Mérida, a prisoner for some crimes which it was said he had committed and which probably involved idolatry, since idols were [later] found in his house. . . ."

The next days the friars spent decorating the church in preparation for the festival of Pentecost while the *alcalde* Carrillo carried out his *visita*, charging "as a royal representative . . . what was due the king." Although Fuensalida may not have admitted as much in his original *relación*, Carrillo's fine-collecting activities surely had the effect of undermining the friars' future relations with the inhabitants of Tipu. Carrillo apparently stayed for the processions and ritual of Pentecost, which had never taken place in Tipu before then, but he then departed, leaving Fuensalida and Orbita on their own.

The Mayas of Tipu behaved admirably for the friars, attending mass and sending their children to the priests every day to practice their catechisms. Fuensalida, however, was no fool and commented in his *relación* that "what was going on in their hearts God, who is privy to all their secrets, knows; but they seemed to be sincere." They guarded the chalice with special care, knowing that Father Gregorio, the secular priest, always carried his with him in fear that if he left it behind it would be profaned "with some idolatry."

Each family of Mayas was expected to support the visitors for one day. There were some 100 *vecinos* in all in Tipu, suggesting a total population of about 340. Although the town had a nominal cacique (Don Cristóbal Na), the most important principal was Don Francisco Cumux:

who was descendent from the lord of the island of Cozumel, who was received by D. Fernando Cortés when he was on his way to the conquest of Nueva España. The *relación* says that his nobility and good blood, even though Indian, came through in the courtesy and affability with which he treated the religious. He was a great devotee of the church, for which he was a fine cantor and musician (a custom that many of the lords who have been in this region observed at the begin-

ning of their Christianity). He sent his children to the religious in order that they teach them in the schools, and for many years, although now not so often, sang in the choruses if he were an ordinary Indian.

As noted earlier, the town's maestro de capilla had fled to Tipu from Hecelchakan, near Campeche, and had grown wealthy from his assiduous labor in establishing a large cacao orchard. The wealth and importance of Tipu, clearly, rested upon its success as a producer of fine-quality cacao.

Tipuans and Itzas

After lengthy meetings with the town's principales it was decided that Don Francisco Cumux, accompanied by "some intelligent Indians," would head a delegation to Tah Itza in order to announce the friars' desire to visit Can Ek. He was to carry a letter from Fuensalida, who was the comisario of the mission, addressed to Can Ek, the content of which Fuensalida recalled as follows:

He and his companion, Father Orbita, had arrived at the town of Tipu, where they were staying. The reason for their [Cumux's delegation] coming was to see him and to tell him certain things that would be good for him and his people, and he should send for them and their captains in order that they might hear what was proposed to them by the letter. They came in peace, without soldiers or arms, only two poor Franciscans (of which they already knew for they had seen ones from the city of Mérida),³⁶ and he should send his principales to see them in Tipu, for they wanted, with his license and good will providing them security, to go to see him, and that if he gave it to them they would be very pleased, for without his consent they would not do anything.

Cumux left for Tah Itza with his companions and sufficient food supplies to sustain them across a long stretch of uninhabited territory. He arrived after six days, and the Itzas "received him affably and took care of him and everyone with him according to the rank of each one." He presented the letter to Can Ek, who called a meeting of all his "captains" and "principales" to decide how to respond. Some of these leaders "already knew who they were" (presumably because of Orbita's earlier visit) and realized that they were harmless on their own. The decision was made to allow only the two friars to visit Tah Itza, a message that was carried back to Tipu with two Itza "captains"—Ah Chata Pol and Ahau Puc—and more than twenty other Itzas who returned with Cumux's party.

This impressive delegation arrived at Tipu fifteen days after Chumux had left. Ah Cha Tapol and Ahau Puc carried with them

lances with hard, wide blades like ours, and on the head of them were many feathers of diverse and beautiful colors, like the ribbons used by ensigns on their daggers, and the blade was a fourth as long as two *cortes* [a measurement of cloth] with the point of a dagger. The other Indians came with the bows and arrows that they always carried when away from their island and surrounding territory in case they were to meet Chinamita Indians, another nation who were their enemies and with whom they were usually at war. When they arrived before the religious, they greeted them as was their custom, which was to throw the right arm over the shoulder as a signal of peace and friendship, and the religious did the same.

Ah Chata Pol and Ahau Puc were put up in the house of the cacique, Don Cristóbal Na, and the others were housed with the principales, who looked out after their comfort "as those on the island had done for ours." Ahau Puc had been among those who had been on the earlier Itza delegation to Mérida, and he spent considerable time talking with Fuensalida and Orbita. The Itza delegation departed after spending five days in Tipu, leaving an open invitation for the friars to visit Tah Itza.

The Road to Tah Itza

On August 15, 1618, about two and a half months after they had arrived at Tipu, the friars left for Tah Itza. With Fuensalida and Orbita were Don Cristóbal Na, more than twenty principales of Tipu, various servants, and the maestro de capilla, singers, and sacristans who had accompanied them from the Sierra. Two leagues west of Tipu, Don Cristóbal Na carried the Franciscans across the Mopan River on his shoulders. Eight or ten leagues further on they reached Lake Yaxha, which the Tipuans told them could not be crossed because there were no canoes. After some argumentation, Fuensalida gave in and they all returned to Tipu. Don Cristóbal sent carpenters back to the lake to build a canoe there while the others spent their time harvesting their crops.

They departed the second time on September 28. By then the increasing rains had made the Mopan River even harder to cross, and it later required three or four trips to ferry the entire party across Lake Yaxha.³⁷ From there they walked fifteen leagues to Lake Zacpeten, which they skirted on the south side along an overgrown path. At this point it became apparent to the friars that the Tipuan guides were pretending to be

lost, taking them far out of the way in the hope that they would tire and ask to return to Tipu. Although they suspected malice, the friars insisted on pushing on. Two days and eighteen leagues later they reached "the lake of the Itzas, which is called Chaltuna."

The party camped on the eastern end of the lake; where mass was said at a portable altar. A Tipuan principal named Don Gaspar Quetzal and several others were sent to notify Can Ek of their arrival and to present as gifts some of the items they had brought from Mérida, a cutlass, and some cacao. After they had waited nervously for eight days, a party from Tah Itza arrived in four large canoes. Among them were Ah Chata Pol and Ahau Puc, whom the friars had already met in Tipu. The combined party set out on the six-league journey across the lake and were met by an advance party in two canoes two leagues from the island of Tah Itza comprising Can Ek's son-in-law and other members of his family. The greeting was hospitable, as they presented the friars with the ritual *saca'* beverage, demonstrating to Fuensalida that "they do have some civilization and political government."

Can Ek and the Evangelicals

The arrival must have been spectacular. It was about 10:00 p.m. when the six canoes pulled up to the embarkment area of the island. Lighted torches made everything "bright and clear" so that the friars could see Can Ek, a number of his principales, and a large crowd of onlookers. Can Ek's welcome was warm, and he took them to a small house that he had had built for them and in which he had installed two bed platforms. The other visitors were lodged nearby. Can Ek's house was about forty paces from the shore and faced a small plaza on which the friars' house was situated, about halfway between his house and the shore. In the days that followed, Can Ek often stopped to talk with them in their quarters.

The Franciscans had already decided to name San Pablo and his companion San Bernabé as the patrons of the new mission.³⁸ Inside their small house they immediately set up an altar in honor of these saints where they could say their first mass, probably on the morning of the second day. While curious crowds watched in silence from outside, Fuensalida said mass and "chanted to his patron San Pablo, asking God out of his mercy and the merits and intercession of the blessed apostle for the conversion of those infidels." Only then did they go out to meet with Can Ek and to ask his permission to "walk around the town and houses to understand better their way of life and what type of government they had, and in order to see the temples where they kept the idols

and congregated for the dances and drinking common among idolators or to make some type of sacrifice."

Can Ek agreed to lead the tour along with his principales. Once this group was assembled, the friars stood before them with their crucifixes in their hands. Fuensalida, setting aside whatever curiosity he might have had about "their way of life," broke into a long and impassioned sermon in fluent Mayan that must have stunned his distinguished audience:

He declared to them their blindness, worshiping the devil through idols, and the vanity of so many gods when there is no more than one true and living, one being three persons. This one created everything out of nothing with only his word and shaped man in his image that he might serve him and enjoy the eternity of his glory, but because of the sin of our first fathers we have all lost the friendship and grace of this God and Lord. For our redemption and to return us to his grace that we might enjoy it, the Son of God was made man in the womb of a Virgin called Santa María. Continuing his discourse he explained to them the incarnation of the eternal word and how our redemption came through his death. He told them how the sacraments were instituted as instruments that give us grace and pardon our sins; the necessity of the holy baptism to save their souls; and finally in general the mysteries necessary to know in order to gain eternal life and how they had come to convert them from children of sin and worthy of eternal damnation into children of God by whose grace they are worthy of the glory.

To this discourse, hardly offered in the "goodness of time," his audience replied to the effect that "it was not time to be Christians (they had their own beliefs as to what should be) and that they should go back where they had come from; they could come back another time, but right then they did not want to be Christians."

God Versus Tzimin Chac

Undaunted, the Itzas nonetheless proceeded with their guided tour. Fuensalida estimated that along the shores of the island there were about two hundred densely packed houses, each with a family of parents and children. The twelve or more temples that they saw were clustered in the middle and upper parts of the island. The largest of these were nearly as large as the most important Maya churches in northern Yucatan and would have held more than a thousand people each.

In the center of one of these large temples the friars were excited to see

a great idol shaped like a horse, made of lime and stone. It was seated on the floor of the temple on its haunches with its back legs folded under and its forefeet raised up. They worshiped it as god of thunder, calling it Tzimin Chac, which means horse of thunder and lightning. They had this idol because, as was noted in the first book of these writings, when D. Fernando Cortés passed through that area on his way to Honduras, he left them a horse that could not travel any further. It died on them, and for fear that they could not return it to him alive if he returned and asked for it, they made it into this statue and began to worship it that they might not be blamed for the death of the horse. Because they entrusted it to the Indians saying they would return for it, and because the Indians believed that it was an animal endowed with reason, they fed it chickens and other meats. They presented it bouquets of flowers as they were accustomed to giving important people. All these honors (which it seems they did) led to the death of the poor horse, who died from hunger. They gave it this name because they had seen some of the Spanish on that expedition firing their harquebuses and muskets above the horses while hunting, and they believed that the horses caused the clamor that seemed like thunder to them and the flash from the muskets and smoke from the powder that seemed like lightning. The devil used this together with the blindness of their superstitions to increase their worship of the statue to the point that when the religious were there it was the principal idol that they honored.

How much of this account of the history of this idol was "known" by either Fuensalida or López de Cogolludo and how much was commonly known Spanish mythology we do not know. In either case, Tzimin Chac proved to be the undoing of the entire mission. Fuensalida recalled seeing Orbita's reaction to the idol:

it was as if the spirit of the Lord had descended upon him; and, filled with a fervent jealousy for God's honor, he picked up a stone in his hand and mounted the statue of the horse and broke it into pieces, scattering them all over the floor.

Although their enraged hosts immediately shouted out threats to murder both friars for this inopportune act, their lives were spared for the moment. Hardly less impulsive but considerably more verbose than his companion, Fuensalida lost no time in embarking on another impassioned sermon. Clutching his crucifix in both hands, he began his sermon with words to this effect:

Know, oh Itzas, that this idol that you worship here as your god is nothing more than a figure of an irrational beast, as are the deer and other animals that you shoot to eat. In it you worship the Devil who has tricked you and blinded you through your idolatries, and that neither he nor you can harm us at all, if our God and true Lord, Creator of heaven and earth and all things, in whom we believe, confess, and worship, does not give you permission to do so. And if it would serve Him to give it to you, that is what we would like, to die for this holy Lord that we have in our hands and who died for us crucified on a holy cross like this one.

We shall give our lives for His holy love and the confession of His faith, which we profess. This is what we came to teach and preach to you, aided by His grace in order that by receiving it you would save yourselves and cease to condemn yourselves to hell, where you will experience eternal torments with these idols that you worship.

See, oh Itzas, that we came to preach and manifest to you Jesus Christ, who was crucified for the good of all and whom you see here on the cross. Look at him well, for this Lord is your true God who created you and rescued you from the Devil's power through His holiness and death, shedding His precious blood for your sakes and for all the men of the world in order to save them and take them to heaven.

Listen to our words, oh Itzas. Believe in God in order that we may baptize you that thereby you may be saved and will no longer be lost as up to now you have been.

Hardly an amateur preacher in the mission field, Fuensalida's verbal shock treatment apparently had—although only momentarily—a remarkable effect on his audience. The Itzas listened quietly throughout his lengthy harangue as Orbita stood quietly by him, so satisfied with what he had done that "his face was so agreeable to see that it praised God to look upon him." Evangelical discourse and its associated body language were no less effective as methods of communicating with unbelievers in 1618 than they are today.

Prophecy and History

Can Ek showed no outward anger when later in the day the friars visited him in his house. In fact, he gave up his throne to them and sat for a while, allowing them to have their say about their desire to convert him and his people. The friars argued that Can Ek's "father" had agreed to serve the Spanish king and to convert to Christianity when Cortés had visited nearly a century earlier; mass had been said on the island, and—remarkably—there was still a cross standing in the town, said to

have been placed there during this first visit. He should honor the promises of his ancestor, they argued. Can Ek was aware of these promises, as he had once learned of them through principales who had themselves received Cortés.

It is possible that this Can Ek was the actual son of the Can Ek who met Cortés in 1525, assuming that the latter was a young man at the time of Cortés's entrada. If so, the Can Ek of 1618 must have been very old. His historical connection with the common past of both Maya and Spanish parties to the present encounter would have had a profound effect on their meeting and might itself explain the positive manner in which he treated his guests.

At this point in their conversation the subject turned to prophecy. The Franciscans argued that

They should fulfill their word; the time had already come and they had the religious there—for this purpose only had they come. Canek answered that the time had not arrived in which their ancient priests had prophesied they would need to give up the worship of their gods, for the present age was one called *Ox Ahau* (which means third age) and the one that was signaled to them was not arriving so soon. He asked them not to talk about it any more and to return to Tipu and to come another time to see them on their island.

We see from this conversation that Can Ek and the friars shared in common yet another, even more profound historical agreement—that a new time in the Maya calendar would come when the Itzas would accept the new religious and political order. This was the conjuncture at which the Christians, hopeful of evangelical success, could justifiably encounter the Other.

Can Ek now argued, however, that Katun 3 Ahau was not the new katun in which this event would occur. By implication we may assume that Fuensalida and Orbita—like Fray Andrés de Avendaño y Loyola, who offered a similar challenge sixty years later on the eve of Katun 8 Ahau—had presented Can Ek this katun as the time of change. They probably had good reason to do so, as they must have understood not only the temporal significance of the earlier Itza emissary to Mérida but, even more significantly, the temporal contingency of their own visit to Tah Itza.

Despite the external disagreements over katun prophecies, Can Ek was the first to receive a cross offered him by the friars, who then passed out crosses to others assembled around them. He even allowed them to

chant the mass while they stayed in their lodgings, "in seventh tone as was the custom in that province, and that he who chanted it for the others might have a cross in his hand." Fuensalida sensed that Can Ek ignored Orbita's rash actions "because he really wanted to be the first to receive holy baptism; but out of fear of his subjects or some other reason that was not evident, he did not carry it through nor allow anything more to do with it."

The Gifts of Heathens

The friars stayed on several more days before deciding to give up and return to greener evangelical pastures at Tipu. The Itzas gave them several "statues of idols," "many stones,"³⁹ and samples of their clothing that they could take back to Yucatan to show people there. The idols were not described, but the clothing was said to consist of

mantas like the *hayates* of Indians around here [in Yucatan], elaborately wrought and embroidered with different colors, their workmanship almost like that of damask. Others were about four *varas* long and one-third wide. These were embroidered with many different colored feathers which covered up their private parts. This was their principal regalia, because they do not wear anything else.

As they began to cross the lake some who were angered by Orbita's destruction of Tzimin Chac threw stones at them and mocked them. They were chased for two hours by two canoe-loads of Itzas armed with bows and arrows and with blackened bodies. Like all Itzas, their hair was long, and they "looked horrible, like demons." As they pulled up alongside the friars' canoe with their bows drawn, one final verbal exchange broke out, but this time Fuensalida and Orbita let their Tipuan host handle matters:

They said the right words to them, especially one of our Indians named Gaspar Quetzal, who called the one leading them "uncle" and told them, "Why do you want to shoot them now that they are going?" Angrily he answered him, "Don't you bring these *xolopes*⁴⁰ back any more," which is what they call us Spaniards since they saw the first ones eat anonas, which is a tropical fruit. God prevailed, for they left with that.

The returning party spent that night some distance inland from the east end of the lake, afraid that they might be attacked. They were left in peace, however, and four days later they arrived back at Tipu. If Lopéz

de Cogolludo's statement that they left the island at the beginning of November is correct, they would have spent at least three weeks at Tah Itza.

Friars and Idolaters

At this point Fuensalida announced to Orbita that he should remain in Tipu by himself while he returned to report to the provincial and the bishop and to try once again to obtain official letters from the governor. Fuensalida arrived in Mérida just as the Feast of the Immaculate Conception was about to begin on December 8, 1618.⁴¹ After the festivities had subsided he presented the religious officials with some of the gifts he had received at Tah Itza. His report seems to have been accepted lukewarmly, but assistance was promised "that he might go again to visit those infidels."

Fuensalida set out again for Tipu at the beginning of 1619, stopping first at Oxkutzcab, where the governor was on a visita. There he once again solicited letters from Ramírez that would require support from the Spaniards of Bacalar and the Mayas of Tipu. This time, although the governor still claimed that he had no royal orders to do so, the letters were prepared for him.

Orbita, in the meantime, had been experiencing "less reverence" and declining respect from his Tipuan hosts. He had written to Fuensalida complaining that the Mayas were irreverent and inattentive in church and that his sermons to them had been of no avail. Upon Fuensalida's return the situation improved briefly, and the friars began to extend their indoctrination activities to the inhabitants of the nearby towns of Lucu and Zaczuz. During this period the friars also invited at least one party of Itzas to visit them at Tipu. Several months later, in May, Orbita

discovered great idolatry in Tipu in which most of the men and women of the town were involved. He found a great quantity of idols, and next to the house of the cacique, who had been D. Luis Mazun (who, as was said, died in jail in Mérida), he discovered an alcove [*retrete*] with some idols and vestments from their priests inside that had been owned by that cacique and that now belonged to his wife Doña Isabel Pech. The religious called her, and when they asked her who the idols and vestments belonged to, she answered that her husband had left them there and that they were from the Itzas. Although they whipped her a few times to make her tell the truth, she was not able to say any more. Father Orbita addressed the Indians with such a spirit that they themselves showed him a great multitude of idols, so many that Father Fuensalida says they could not be counted, because they made a differ-

ent idol to worship each thing that they felt like. The Father destroyed all that they found and threw them into the deepest part of the river.

In the midst of this crisis a party of Bacalar Spaniards, including the secular priest Gregorio Marín de Aguilar and the *alcalde* (whose name we do not know), arrived in Tipu. Ignoring the presence of the Franciscans, the Bacalareños requested that the *beneficiado* "as their vicar" determine who the guilty parties were and administer the appropriate punishment. He prepared a large fire in the plaza, read the sentences, burned some of the idols reserved for the purpose, and issued a threat to burn to death in a similar fire any who might commit the crime of idolatry again. He thereupon administered whippings for the "most guilty" and "lighter punishments" for the rest.

So infuriated was Fuensalida at this breach of the bishop's prohibition of the secular priest's interference in their mission that he sent Orbita off to Mérida to complain to the bishop. There he received new orders from the bishop and the governor to continue their residence in Tipu, "commanding the Indians to assist them with anything they needed and to submit themselves to their control." The bishop wrote to Marín de Aguilar, reprimanding him and forbidding him to visit Bacalar until called by the friars. Orbita headed off yet again for Tipu.

Flight from Tah Itza

Relations between the friars and the Tipuans appeared to improve thereafter, and plans for a return visit to Tah Itza were renewed. Once again a small party of Tipuan *principales* went to seek Can Ek's permission for the visit, and once again they returned with Itza messengers. This time the friars changed their strategy in their conversations with the emissaries. In addition to the usual matter of the future state of their souls, they discussed

the other advantage that would result in the present: eternal peace between them and the Chinamitas, their mortal enemies. For receiving the faith they would have the Spanish as their friends who would defend them from whoever might try to harm them or their lands as they had done in Yucatan with their relatives the Maya Indians, about whom they knew the peace and security with which each one lived in their house, quiet and untroubled. Those that had come to Mérida knew how the Indians had *caciques*, *alcaldes*, and other *justicias* from

among their own people to govern them in their towns and along with other advantages. They should tell their countrymen.

The visitors left, promising that the Franciscans would once again be met at Lake Peten Itza by Ahau Puc and Ah Chatà Pol, and "another named Cocom."

The friars had at last begun to demonstrate their worldly diplomatic skills. We may presume that they had been prompted to bring up the issue of peace with the Chinamitas, the Itzas' deadly enemies to their east, by secular authorities in Mérida.⁴² This may well have been a major negotiating point during the 1616 or 1617 Itza visit to Mérida.

Within eight days of the Itzas' departure they set out in early October with a party of nearly forty people, traveling this time on a much more direct route to the lake. They were welcomed as they had been the previous year and stayed in the same house for eight or ten days. Soon, however, their Tipuan escorts deserted them on the excuse that they had to return to harvest their *milpas* and cacao orchards; however, the friars realized that they feared duplicity on the part of the Itzas. Throughout this time the friars were treated well, receiving from men and women alike tortillas, *pozol*, eggs, and fish.

Fuensalida and Orbita continued their preaching to Can Ek and other leaders and thought that "their conversion was near." At this point they reached an agreement

with Canek in the name of the governor that he would retain the *cacicazgo* and govern as he had, since he was the natural lord, and that they would name *alcaldes* and other government officials according to how the Indians already had it. His descendents would succeed him in the *cacicazgo* and one of them, whom he would name, would be given the title of lieutenant and would help him govern. They would not pay tribute for ten years, at which time the king would advise them of a reasonable amount, since they had peacefully become his vassals and received the holy gospel.

Canek himself ordered a cross to be built and erected beside his house for all the Indians to worship in compliance with what had been agreed upon with the priests long ago. They would lift up the sign of the cross and worship the true God, leaving off their idols. He named *fiscales* to assist the religious with anything necessary for the church and worship, and everything was put in order so that the governor in the name of the king would confirm the new election and other things agreed upon by the religious and the Itzas.

From this remarkable agreement it is obvious that Fuensalida had returned from Mérida earlier that year with explicit instructions for diplomatic overtures to Can Ek. The reasons why Can Ek was amenable in late 1619, whereas he had put off their overtures only a few months earlier, might have had to do with reinterpretations of the meaning of Katun 3 Ahau that had been negotiated following the friars' departure. The agreements appear to be similar to those reached in Mérida on the Itza visit there, suggesting the presence of a strong political faction led by Can Ek favoring his appointment as a cacique under Spanish control. Even if such further internal agreements had been reached at Tah Itza in 1619, however, they turned out to be neither popular nor binding.

López de Cogolludo blamed what followed on the "Enemy of Humanity" who began to incite some of the "wicked priests" against the friars, and who "had not forgotten how powerful is the woman's persuasive ability to trick the man and that through her he brought about the perdition of us all in our first father." The woman in question was Can Ek's own wife, who Fuensalida believed was persuaded by these priests to have her husband throw the friars off the island and send them back to Tipu. If she did not, they threatened, they would exile her along with her family and the Itza soldier Nacom [Chata] Pol.

Three Tipuans who had returned to escort the friars back with them reported early one morning seeing a number of canoes on the beach in preparation for a major ritual that was to be held in Can Ek's orchard on the mainland. Most of the town went off to attend the ritual while the friars remained in their house throughout the day, praying for the souls of the heathens. When Can Ek returned he did not visit them as usual, and the next day a large group of armed Itzas entered their house and "without a word began removing all the clothing and ornaments, carrying them to the boats. Then they told them to leave with all their belongings and to take the Indians from Tipu that were with them, because they did not want to be Christians nor be around them any more." Orbita resisted as he was being pushed toward the boats, angering one of the Itzas, who grabbed his cowl and threw him to the ground, knocking him unconscious. Fuensalida was treated less harshly. Fuensalida reported that Can Ek "saw and approved all of this without saying a word to the Indians." Fuensalida, the unconscious Orbita, and the three Tipuans were put in an old canoe and sent on their way. Although they had been given no food for the journey, the Tipuans, realizing what was about to happen, had picked up the tortillas and pozol from the house.

Once back in Tipu, Fuensalida and Orbita reportedly suffered mixed

emotions at the outcome of their second visit; they were upset at their lack of success, yet depressed at not having been martyred in the process. Realizing, nonetheless, that nothing more was to be gained by staying, they decided to return to Yucatan. Polite to the end, Cristóbal Na and his principales professed sadness at their departure from Tipu, but the wise Fuensalida "says he thinks they were happy (although the cacique was a good Christian) to be left alone to live as they wanted." The prophetic quality of this comment surely reflected Fuensalida's later realization of the inevitability of the resistance that was to follow.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

This stunning series of interconnected events leaves us with several impressions that will guide the narrative of the chapters that follow. First, we may assume that during Orbita's first visit to Tah Itza in 1616 or 1617 Can Ek had agreed to spearhead a Christianization movement and to accept nominal Spanish rule with himself as cacique of a bitterly divided Itza confederacy. This would almost certainly have been done in return for the same ten-year holiday from tribute payments that was offered to him in 1619. Can Ek thereupon agreed to send the delegation of 150 to meet Governor Figueroa in Mérida, accompanied by the hero of the day, Orbita. There, as Lizana reported, the república appointments made by Orbita were confirmed, and the emissaries returned, possibly via Tipu. Can Ek's control of his fractious leaders of a growing population around the lake was weakened primarily by rival prophetic interpretations of the impending Katun 3 Ahau. That katun had already begun when Fuensalida and Orbita arrived at Tah Itza in 1618, having doubtless known of the political situation before they decided to make the journey.

There were striking similarities between the Itza embassy of 1616 or 1617 and that of 1695, when Can Ek sent representatives to Mérida to declare their submission to the crown. Both of these events took place on the eve of a new katun (3 Ahau and 8 Ahau respectively). Both involved subsequent explicit references by Can Ek to the prophecies, which were apparently well understood by the Franciscan friars. Both were followed by indications of major divisions among the confederation leaders of the Lake Peten Itza area, placing Can Ek in the position of appearing to be a weak pro-Spanish power seeker, anxious to co-opt any Spanish takeover and act as a colonially sanctioned cacique over the entire confederacy.

In both cases Can Ek lost the internal battle for power. In the earlier case the "conservatives" managed to gain full control, resulting in the

deaths in 1624 of Fray Diego Delgado and his party at Tah Itza and in the Sacalum massacre, to be discussed below. In the latter case it was already too late, and the Itzas were overcome militarily. History nearly repeated itself.

The 1618 transition from Katun 5 Ahau to Katun 3 Ahau at Tah Itza thus stimulated intense internal factional struggle between Can Ek and his political allies on the one hand and certain religious factions on the other. From the time of Orbita's early brief visit to the island to the very eve of the Franciscans' ignominious departure in October of 1619, Can Ek had demonstrated an underlying and sometimes explicit willingness to accept Christian conversion in order to strengthen his political legitimacy under Spanish rule. He probably did so both in the hope that his conflicts with neighboring Maya enemies might be contained with Spanish support and out of fear that his dynastic succession as *halach uinic* might be preserved.

At this moment of history the very existence of the confederacy of local polities that comprised the "Itza" kingdom was at stake. Prophetic records warned of the confederacy's imminent collapse in the face of external conquest, and it appeared that the enemy was knocking at the door. Can Ek therefore found appealing the notion that change could occur in the guise of Christian conversion even while the political legitimacy of the Can Eks could be maintained and—in the long run—strengthened.

For all their evangelical zeal, Fuensalida and Orbita were clearly aware of these circumstances, regarding their timely arrival as a remarkable conjunction of God's will working both through Maya prophecy and through them as His instruments of the Gospel's inevitable victory over heathenism. That they failed was due, they concluded, neither to any mistake on their part nor even to the unwillingness of the recalcitrant and hateful Itzas. "Divine Providence's time for their conversion must not have arrived," opined López de Cogolludo. Besides, the true villain in the scheme of things was the Enemy of Mankind himself, against whom even God Himself sometimes lost.

Nonetheless, Orbita's rash destruction of Tzimin Chac would come back to haunt Fuensalida in years to come. This issue had worried Fuensalida deeply, as he wondered whether they should not have followed the advice of the Yucatecan theologian Fray Francisco Gutierrez to follow the doctrine of St. Augustine and "first remove the idols from the hearts of the infidels and then the figures that adorned their altars." "But who," Fuensalida continued, "can resist the spirit of the lord?"⁴³ It is difficult for us to grasp the ideological fervor of a man like Orbita, who

even in his own day was regarded as a man of particularly deep and selfless religious commitment. That he could indeed comprehend the Other well enough to negotiate political solutions yet be incapable of understanding the cultural significance of his acts, should actually be no surprise to those of us who live in the late twentieth century.

Tipu, as a key part of the colonial frontier with the Itzas, over the next decades and katuns remained high on the agenda of both the Itzas and the Spaniards. But as time went on its association with the Spaniards at Bacalar became less an essential part of its identity and its sentiments turned more closely to its Maya neighbors on Lake Peten Itza. The Itzas had reclaimed their political hegemony for the moment, and the Spanish religion had lost whatever compelling separate identity it had possessed. From then on, Tipu and the other Maya towns of the southern Bacalar province would experiment increasingly with ritual options that did not force them to choose between one religion or the other. They gave up neither one, as the friars had hoped they would in 1618 and 1619, but rather made the conscious choice to remain true people of the dual world in which they lived—neither Itzas nor Spanish Indians, but Mayas who negotiated with all the spiritual powers and temporal powers that surrounded them.

6: KATUN 3 AHAU: MURDER IN THE CHAPEL



That his will that sustains us
may not delay,
And that with that will
may our Lord God protect all,
Our old ones,
and our maestro¹

MISSIONARIES AND SOLDIERS

Franciscan attention to the frontiers of Yucatan had reached its nadir with Fuensalida and Orbita's two-year miscarried effort to convert the Itzas. Although the order attempted no further projects of this magnitude following their expulsion from Tah Itza in 1619, their failures did not end the dream of a peaceful solution to the "Itza problem" through missionization and conversion.

Only a few years later another chapter in the interlocking history of Spanish missionaries and soldiers, Itzas, and frontier Mayas began to unfold. This episode, which lasted from 1621 until 1624, was characterized by levels of violence and tragedy on both sides that were not to be approached again until the Itza conquest of 1697. Like both earlier and later events, the events of this period were deeply enmeshed in the evangelical interests of Franciscan missionaries. What distinguished the period from those that preceded it was the introduction for the first time of a strategy of military conquest in order to accomplish the full submission of the Itzas.

This chapter details this first joint effort by missionaries and soldiers to lay the foundation for the conquest of the Itzas. Although the doomed project ultimately involved both the Mayas and Spaniards of the Bacalar province, it was designed by a military man, Francisco Mirones y Lezcano, who thought that he could accomplish it on his own, without recourse to the slim resources of the remote villa of Bacalar. His efforts

failed, due to his lack of understanding of the dynamics of the native frontier, his personal greed, and his unwillingness to heed the warnings of those who knew more than he did. His conflicts with a Franciscan friar, Diego Delgado—who was every bit as impetuous, committed, and morally driven as Orbita—demonstrated that he had lost touch with the realities of the frontier that he sought to conquer.

Mirones, his soldiers, their Maya servants, Delgado and another Franciscan, and a number of Tipuans were killed in two separate massacres during the ill-conceived entrada. One party, led by Fray Diego Delgado, was killed at Tah Itza while trying to convince Can Ek to accept Spanish rule before the Spaniards could arrive. The other party, headed by Mirones, was murdered at Sacalum near Ixpimienta shortly after the massacre at Tah Itza. These events were followed by even more violence as Spaniards in the Sierra tracked down the alleged perpetrators of the Sacalum massacre and executed their leaders.

Katun 3 Ahau was not an auspicious period for armed intervention on the frontiers between Yucatan and Lake Peten Itza. The message received by the Franciscans who were expelled from Tah Itza in 1619 had been a clear one: this is not, after all, the epoch during which we expect to submit to Spanish control. Later, perhaps, but not now. By the time the tragic events of 1624 were over, the message had apparently finally reached Spanish consciousness, but by then even more Mayas had lost their lives as a result of Spanish revenge.

The Sources

In 1936–1937 France V. Scholes and Eleanor Adams published transcriptions of several documents pertaining to the 1622–1624 expedition of Francisco Mirones y Lezcano into the Ixpimienta area west of Bacalar. Except for a brief extract from Cárdenas y Valencia's *Relación historial eclesiástica de la provincia de Yucatán, 1639–43*,² the documents primarily comprise an important *expediente* from the Archivo General de Indias that included Mirones's detailed diary of his entrada from Mérida to Ixpimienta. As this diary, the centerpiece of the expediente, provides remarkable details concerning the conditions of native life on the frontier, it will be treated in depth in this chapter.

López de Cogolludo also provided considerable detail about the events of the time, including information not found in the AGI expediente.³ Finally, I was fortunate to discover various additional references to the events in the AGI, including an important expediente covering an entrada by Juan Bernardo Casanova in 1624 that resulted in the discovery of the massacre at Sacalum, the town near Ixpimienta at which Mirones had

established his armed presidio. These documents provide remarkable details about what the Spanish soldiers found shortly after the massacre had occurred. Included in this material is a Spanish translation of a Maya letter purported to have been exchanged among the frontier rebels. Perhaps the earliest known example of such correspondence, a phrase from this powerful letter provides the quotation at the heading of this chapter.

Taken together, the documents provide a rare opportunity to examine the total event that embraced the planning, execution, and disastrous end of a major effort to "pacify" the southern frontier. More than any other parallel event of the time, the Ixpimienta-Sacalum affair allows us to understand not only the intensity of Maya-Spanish conflict on the frontier but also the dynamics of both native life and Spanish activity in the context of entrada activity.

LA PIMIENTA AND SACALUM

The initial founding of the frontier reduction of Sacalum by Franciscans in about 1604 was introduced in Chapter 5. Sacalum was far to the east of the other missions reduced during this period, located over 100 km from Ichbalche, of which it was a visita mission in the earliest years. A convent may have been established at Sacalum in 1611–1612, and in the latter year Fray Joseph del Bosque served as Sacalum's guardian.⁴ Even during this early period it was known for its uncooperative attitude toward the missionaries; Fray Juan Roldán, who spent some time there, described its inhabitants as "the most vicious" of all those whom he served on the frontier.⁵

News about Sacalum evaporated from the record after 1615, when a number of the frontier missions were congregated at Sahcabchen, until sometime in 1622 or 1623, when Francisco de Mirones y Lezcano and Fray Juan Delgado re congregated a number of inhabitants there from the Pimienta region.⁶ Sacalum received San Felipe as its patron saint, and it was by his name that it was known by the Mayas of the region.

Ixpimienta, which was the first major destination of the Mirones-Delgado entrada of 1622, does not appear in the record before that year. It must have been well known in Mérida, however, as the center of a large number of fugitive encomienda Mayas, particularly from the area around Hecelchakan near Campeche. In later years the region around Ixpimienta achieved notoriety, with claims that in 1630 it sequestered some 20,000 tributaries.⁷ In 1663 a number of these runaways returned to Oxkutzcab in the Sierra and provided details to provincial officials in Mérida about conditions in the Pimienta area.⁸ Finally, in 1687, the area

was reconquered by Juan del Castillo y Toledo, who, like Mirones, hoped to establish a base in the area for the eventual conquest of the Itzas.⁹

Ixpimienta, whose name signified the quantities of wild allspice trees that grew in the area, was considered by the Spanish to be on the road from the Sierra to Lake Petén Itza. Its fugitive population was in constant contact through trade and intermarriage with the encomienda towns of northern Yucatan.

There was more than one town known as Pimienta. Mirones arrived at the town he called Ixpimienta, while in 1663 the reference was to La Pimienta Grande and in 1687 to two towns known as La Pimienta Alta and La Pimienta Baja. The locations of Nohpimienta (presumably the same as La Pimienta Grande and La Pimienta Alta) and Tzucpimienta (presumably the same as La Pimienta Baja) appear on the Hübbe-Pérez map of 1879.¹⁰ I discuss the locations of these sites in the Appendix, concluding that Tzucpimienta was probably the place known as Ixpimienta in the 1620s. Apparently Nohpimienta was a later reduction site, but we have no knowledge of its founding.

Sacalum appears on no maps but was considered by all contemporary sources to have been on the road beyond Ixpimienta (Tzucpimienta or La Pimienta Baja) toward Lake Peten Itza.¹¹ It is likely that it was located at or near the site of Chanchanha, a reduction town founded in 1687 and apparently continuously occupied until about 1862.

La Pimienta was known in the seventeenth century as a region of particularly troublesome fugitives, an extensive area entirely outside the control of colonial forces. Despite the region's proximity to the villa of Salamanca de Bacalar, there is no evidence that the Spaniards of Bacalar ever made any effort to control it. Its location, in fact, demonstrated the Mayas' ability to carry on an independent way of life almost under the noses of the Bacalareños a few kilometers away. Traders, travelers, and refugees passed through this region connecting the Peten and northern Yucatan without meeting a single Spanish settlement. We know from Fray Juan Delgado's activities that there was a road between La Pimienta and Tipu, and we can surmise that Tipu's primary contact with places to the north was through La Pimienta and not through Bacalar. Such a frontier "center" must have wielded great influence throughout a vast territory, and it is no wonder that the Spanish were ultimately so concerned with its conquest as a necessary stage in the pacification of the Itzas.

It seems obvious that La Pimienta was within the contact-period province of Cochua, which we discussed in Chapter 2. Dávila could well have passed directly through the region of Ixpimienta in 1531 either

on his trip to Chetumal or on his chase after the murderers of his messengers. Its absence from the historical record as a named place from 1531 until 1621 suggests that the region had continued to be an unconquered hotbed of resistance throughout the century. In fact, it may well have been one of the rebellious regions encountered by Juan Garzón during his western entrada of 1568.

Delgado and Mirones: Background to the Entrada to Ixpimienta

Fray Diego Delgado, a native of Pedroso in Spain, was serving as guardian of the convent of Hecelchakan when he first decided to take on a reduction mission in the montaña of southern Yucatan. Delgado had served as guardian of several towns of Yucatan and had recently been a provincial secretary. Before that he had served in the province of La Florida. He was about thirty-eight years old in 1621.¹² Following the Franciscan chapter meeting held in Mérida on 24 January 1621, he requested license to reduce fugitives who, it was believed, "had been idolatrizing in the company of gentiles." He received approval for the mission from the Franciscan provincial Francisco de la Parra, and before the interim governor, Arias de Losada y Taboada, had time to grant his license, the new governor, Diego de Cárdenas, arrived in early September and soon prepared his official papers.¹³

Later that year Delgado recruited sacristans and maestros cantores from Hecelchakan, "thus providing him guides and ministers who could assist him in celebrating the sacraments of the mass." Like Fuensalida and Orbita before him, he recruited additional followers from the towns in the Sierra. He reached as far as a town called Hopelchen, on the road to the infamous region of La Pimienta. Hopelchen still exists as a town, located at about 19° 45'N, 89° 50'W along Highway 261, about 100 kms east of Campeche.¹⁴

At Hopelchen Delgado congregated a full reduction town, which was composed primarily of fugitives.¹⁵ There, with authority from the governor, he named a cacique, alcaldes, regidores, and other town officers. He returned to Mérida shortly thereafter, and by March 19 he was named to accompany a military entrada with aims to conquer the Itzas, under Captain Francisco de Mirones Lescano.¹⁶ This entrada was to go via Hopelchen, and Delgado was on his way to join it by the beginning of April 1622.

Francisco de Mirones y Lezcano was a military man who had served in Spain against the Turks near Málaga in 1610. For several years he had been a militia captain along the northern coast of Yucatan, where he also held the notorious title of *juez de grana* or overseer of cochineal produc-

tion. Although armed entradas to Tah Itza were forbidden by the crown, Governor Cárdenas approached Mirones in 1621 with a plan to pursue an armed conquest of the Itzas from a base at Sacalum. Mirones agreed to the plan, which was promptly submitted to the Council of the Indies.¹⁷

In a petition addressed to governor Diego de Cárdenas on 9 November 1621, Mirones offered to carry out an entrada into "idolatrous" Indian provinces where fugitive Indians "and wrongdoers" had been fleeing from the settled provinces in order to seek refuge. These, he understood, included not only those idolatrous "barbarians" living at the lake of Tah Itza, those of the Lacandon sierras, and those located in other islands and provinces, but also various "baptized runaways" from Yucatan, including their children and their descendants. These peoples collectively exerted a negative influence on the "natives of these provinces" due to their proximity to them.

In his petition Mirones carefully noted the entrada of Fuensalida and Orbita in 1618 to Tah Itza, where their successes included saying mass, preaching, the destruction and burning of idols, and the sworn conversion to Christianity of various Itzas.¹⁸ Once their conversion had been sworn to, Mirones argued, the Itzas became *rebels* whom the crown had the right to pacify by whatever entrada might be necessary. The purpose of his petition was to offer his services to convert and pacify "the said Indians and provinces" under fifteen particularly ambitious and self-serving conditions:

1. Mirones would be *cabo* (commander) and capitán of the troops under his command ("in accordance with the quality and nobility of my person, as I am the son of someone famous") and *gobernador y justicia mayor* (governor's deputy) of any Spanish town founded by him.¹⁹
2. He would arm, supply, and designate military officers among 100 men chosen for the journey; he could also recruit fife players, drummers, and flag bearers if necessary.
3. He would have the right to carry out any entradas that he considered appropriate until "all the said provinces are finished being reduced and pacified."
4. He would be authorized to establish settlements and erect fortifications; these would belong to him as long as he lived and would pass with any salary provided by the crown to his heirs.
5. He would collect whatever Indians he pacified or reduced in towns where they could be indoctrinated, and the governor would request that the Franciscan provincial provide him with a friar.
6. Two thousand of the reduced Indians would belong to the crown.

Of the remaining, Mirones would receive one-third in encomienda; these would pass to his descendants, or, if he had no children, to a successor whom he would name. He would distribute the remaining two-thirds in encomienda as he saw fit among his officers and soldiers.

7. Out of whatever gold, pearls, amber, silver, or other goods he might find, he would ultimately pay the appropriate fifth part to the crown.
8. Any Spanish town that he founded would be named a villa, and in these he would appoint the cabildo members.
9. Spaniards in these towns would pay no *almojarifazgo* (import-export duty) or *alcabala* (excise tax) fees for the first ten years, in order to foster settlement.
10. He would buy supplies and munitions at market value (as opposed to government monopoly rates); the Indian communities would have to sell him maize at current rates; and the ports of the province would have to furnish him with supplies, arms, and munitions at his cost.
11. He would be able to hire and fire personnel at his own discretion.
12. He would open a road toward Guatemala with Indian laborers from the towns of Mani, Ticul, Oxkutzcab, Tekax, and other towns of the Sierra region, having them cut the road toward the south. He would begin in November and would take experienced pilots with him.
13. He could take with him all the cargo horses, Indian carriers, female Indian corn millers, and guides that he might need, if he paid them the going rate.
14. He had the sole right to dispose of property in the villas that he founded—except for the principal church, hospital, casas reales, cabildo buildings, and other public buildings, which would be under the control of the *alcalde ordinario*. Whatever privileged positions he held in Mérida he would retain for the rest of his life and would be passed on to his heirs without payments to the crown.
15. The governor would request royal approval of these conditions in light of the scope of the voluntary service that he was undertaking and of the merits of his ancestors.

In his decree responding to Mirones's petition, Governor Cárdenas cited the precedence of Cortés's early journey to Tah Itza and Don Pablo Paxbolon's entradas in the Tixchel region.²⁰ More important, he had located two cédulas that he claimed supported the proposed venture. The first of these, dated 1 November 1579, ordered a reduction of the area south of Yucatan and Tabasco, where idolators were said to control "land rich in gold mines and very fertile." The second, dated 25 May 1607,

concerned the conversion and welfare of the Indians and ordered that newly reduced Indians be exempt from tribute and not be assigned in *encomienda* for a period of ten years.²¹ Notwithstanding the restrictions of the latter *cédula*, the governor agreed to all the conditions posed by Mirones and named him "capitán y cabo y justicia mayor" ("captain, commander, and chief magistrate") of the journey to the territory of the Tah Itzas, Lacandones, and other provinces that he had offered to convert and pacify.

Cárdenas was particularly supportive of Mirones's plans to open a road all the way to Guatemala, which, he wrote, "would be so beneficial to the natives [of the southern regions], who through trade with the flatlands [that is, northern Yucatan] could have wheat fields; and these provinces would enrich themselves from the many other fruits that this communication would provide."

It is difficult to understand how Mirones and Cárdenas could have anticipated the accomplishment of all of these goals, which were no less ambitious than those achieved by Martín de Ursúa y Arismendi in 1696–1697 with far more men and financial investment than Mirones was able to mount in 1621. Mirones was apparently badly advised concerning the distances involved, the vastness of free Maya territory, and the degree of Maya hostility that he would likely encounter. Cárdenas, who had just arrived in Yucatan, was likewise ill-informed about the complexity and scale of the undertaking that Mirones had proposed. There were many in Yucatan who could have provided them with informed advice—especially the experienced friars Fuensalida and Orbita—but as events unfolded it became obvious that such advice either had not been sought or had been studiously ignored in the rush to accomplish by secular, military means what had failed through prior evangelical and diplomatic techniques.

The 1622 *entrada* was based on the sort of enthusiasm and risk-taking that only the promise of future financial fortune could have generated. It appears that Mirones and Cárdenas were engaged in plans that were strictly forbidden by recent royal decrees. The Franciscans had carefully engineered the restriction of any *entradas* into these territories to ecclesiastical efforts, the postponement of *encomienda* tributes for a ten-year period, and the restriction of any such tributes to the crown itself. All such restrictions were bypassed by Cárdenas and Mirones without waiting for authority from the Council of the Indies.²²

Mirones was very clearly an ambitious, self-serving man of a sort that had probably not been seen in Yucatan before 1621. Hampered by the fact that he was a newcomer who had little chance of acquiring an en-

comienda through the normal channels, he curried the favor of a new and equally ambitious governor through whose patronage he hoped to gain for himself the presumed wealth of unconquered territories. His plan put at risk not only his own life but those of his voluntary followers as well as those Mayas who were forced to join in his venture. As we shall see, Delgado's efforts to bypass or override the excesses of Mirones's entrada were no less suicidal or threatening to the lives of those who agreed or were pressured to join him. In neither case did the principals listen to advice or heed previous warnings that the pacification of the region was not to be tolerated during this period.

FUGITIVE MAYAS: THE MIRONES JOURNAL

Mirones kept a detailed journal (from 9 March to 31 May 1622) of his entrada from Ticul via Pustunich and Oxkutzcab to Hopelchen (Delgado's reduction town) and eventually on to the town of Ixpimienta.²³ The account stops shortly after their arrival at Ixpimienta, so we do not learn about the removal of their headquarters to Sacalum or any of the events that followed. This daily journal nonetheless contains remarkable details about the social life of the fugitive towns, the process of recruitment of Mayas from the north, and the formation and near dissolution of an armed entrada under the direction of a tough and ruthless military man and his Franciscan companion.

This document provides rare native testimonies regarding flight from the region around Hecelchakan. We discover that Hopelchen, recongregated by Fray Diego Delgado in 1621, served as a conduit for the movement of people from the Hecelchakan region to Pimienta. The drama of this movement is inescapable, especially as we see spouses separated from one another by male absenteeism and forced kidnappings of women from their husbands and families. Punctuating the movement of people was the movement of goods—salt and metal tools passing through Hopelchen on their way to Pimienta in return for wax cakes that would have been in demand for repartimiento payments in the north.

There are few ventures of this period of Yucatecan history that are described with such an eye for detail. Mirones wanted to record each instance of his own religious piety as well as every evidence of the apostasy and social depravity of the fugitive Mayas. He soon discovered that sin and apostacy were not so easily conquered, however. Countering his initial zeal to bring to a close the first stage of his entrada by means of the reduction of Ixpimienta, we sense an increasing discouragement and an ever-narrowing vision of his ultimate goals. Nearly all of his Maya car-

riers and bushwhackers had run away long before he neared Ixpimienta. Although he does not say so, they probably did so more out of their fear of being identified as accomplices of the Spaniards than out of distaste for the trying and unpleasant work. This fear must have been sensed by the Spaniards, although Mirones never hinted at concerns for his own welfare.

Mirones's entrada began as a relatively small-scale affair, far more restricted in scope than the original plans called for. Nearly all of the bravado of these plans was scrapped before the first troops and supply lines departed Pustunich, primarily, we must assume, because of the lack of sufficient funds to support the original goals. By the time Mirones and Fray Diego reached Ixpimienta, the entrada was reduced to a handful of weary Spaniards and a few loyal Sierra Mayas. The inhabitants of Ixpimienta could easily have murdered the entire party then and there—or at numerous earlier times. That they did not do so could indicate either that the Mayas feared large-scale reprisals or that they realized there would be ample future opportunities.

Perhaps, on the other hand, the inhabitants of Ixpimienta had actually decided to give in to God and crown, as their warm welcome "with palm fronds in their hands" indicated to Mirones and Fray Diego. This possibility appears unlikely, as Maya witnesses testified that they had known for over a year about the intended entrada and that plans were well worked out to defend Ixpimienta from attack. I believe that their warm welcome, at least for some of the Maya leaders, was a trap to be sprung in the fullness of time.

Testimonies at Hopelchen

The diary began at Pustunich, where Mirones had assembled and armed twenty Spanish soldiers and had recruited eighty Mayas from the Sierra towns who were to open the road ahead. Pustunich, he claimed, was the "last of the peaceful towns of this government." It was not, in fact, as along the route ahead (the same one taken by Fuensalida and Orbita) lay the Sierra towns of Mani, Tekax, and Peto. Mirones avoided the well-travelled path toward Bacalar, however, and followed instead a route to the south through Bolonchen and on to Hopelchen, where he arrived on March 10. He even avoided the frontier mission of Sahcabchen just off this southward path, where Orbita was then serving as guardian.

Before setting off from Pustunich, Mirones had apparently been in Mani, where on 7 March he had recruited the native *hidalgo* (native "noble") Don Fernando Uz and two other Mani inhabitants, Pedro Uc

and Melchor Couoh, to carry letters and gifts ahead of his party to Ixpimienta and Xpom, which he described as "the first ones I know of that are idolatrizing and separated from the knowledge of God, our Lord." When he arrived at Hopelchen, he learned from the principal leader of the town, Gaspar Kuyoc, that the Mani delegation had arrived at Hopelchen but had returned without taking the letters and gifts. They had been advised by the inhabitants of Hopelchen that any Maya or Spanish party would be taking their lives in their hands were they to try to go to Ixpimienta and Xpom, whose inhabitants, it was said, had already deserted their towns.

Kuyoc was the first of many Indians along the way whom Mirones required to testify in detail through his interpreter about conditions along the road ahead. These rare examples of native testimony on the circumstances of the fugitive Maya frontier will be summarized from this point on, as in this example:

Gaspar Kuyoc, a man of about sixty years, had traded and communicated with the Indians of Ixpimienta for about fourteen years. These Indians visited Hopelchen during Holy Week and the fiesta of the Holy Spirit, bringing wax, allspice, and copal incense for sale in exchange for salt and blue thread. He had never been to Ixpimienta but had been told that it was about sixty leagues from Hopelchen. The road to Ixpimienta was made intentionally narrow so that only one person could pass, thus preventing Spaniards from using it. Ixpimienta and the towns around it had been founded by baptized natives who had fled from northern Yucatan about sixty years earlier (i.e., 1562, the year of Bishop Landa's idolatry trials).

Kuyoc named three inhabitants of Hecelchakan (Francisco Ac, Pedro Uc, and Luis Keh) who had passed through Hopelchen on a trading mission to Ixpimienta. These returned six or seven months later, each one carrying as much as four *arrobas* of wax made into cakes that they had purchased in Ixpimienta. He understood from them that they could have bought much more wax than they were able to carry, and that the inhabitants of Ixpimienta planted much corn and raised many chickens.

He stated that one Andrés Cob, a native of Campeche, had come from Ixpimienta about a month earlier and could testify as an eyewitness about the place.

With this information Cob was called to testify:

Andrés Cob, a young man of twenty years, had married Ursula Chay the previous year in Hopelchen.²⁴ His wife and her father, Sebastián

Chay, were natives of Halacho, a visita of Calkini, from where they had fled to Hopelchen.²⁵ Within two months after they were married, Sebastián Chay ran away from Hopelchen to Ixpimienta. Gaspar Habnal, who lived in Sebastián Chay's house, informed Cob that eight men from Ixpimienta had visited Sebastián, had exchanged a gift with him, and had talked with Sebastián and Ursula. After that they had gone with his wife and father-in-law to Ixpimienta.

With this knowledge Andrés set out for Ixpimienta, where he found his wife and father-in-law. One night, about four months later, he grabbed his wife and started to return with her to Hopelchen. Along the way he was overtaken by ten men from the town, who took his wife from him. He thereupon fled back to Hopelchen.

While he was in Ixpimienta Andrés learned that the inhabitants there knew that in Mérida there were plans to open a road to Tah Itza and Verapaz and to capture and pacify pagan Indians along the way. A meeting had been held in Ixpimienta to decide what to do should the Spanish attack Ixpimienta. Following the meeting an announcement was made throughout the town that spies had been posted to warn them of the arrival of the Spaniards and that all should be prepared to die for the defense of the town. Each man carried 400 arrows. These arrows were made by Indians who were being punished, and those who did not meet the quota were whipped and imprisoned.

Cob described the temple at Ixpimienta as a house built half of stone and half of thatch. Inside it there were many "idols" for which they burned copal. Those outsiders who visited Ixpimienta were forced to participate in rituals and burn copal for these idols. Upon entering the door of the temple the worshipper bowed his head. The meat of wild birds and animals was also offered to the idols.

In charge of these temples were four "ah quines" (ah k'in, priest) whom they also called bobat, or prophet. These burned copal, dressed in vestments that were made like those worn in the celebration of the Christian mass in Yucatan, and more brightly colored hats (*bonetas*). They spoke in words that Andrés did not understand. He identified the four priests and their original native towns as follow:

Gaspar Ku	Homun
Diego Yam	Mani
Diego Keh	Pocboc ²⁶
Francisco Chi	Tekax

Chi's brother had been hanged during the governorship of Carlos de Luna y Arellano for his participation in the Tekax uprising of 1609, when Fray Juan Coronel was the Tekax guardian.

Andrés identified several other individuals living in Ixpimienta and their towns of origin:

Sebastián Dzib	Dzitbalche
Agustín Zima ²⁷	Dzitbalche
Marcos Dzib	Dzitbalche
Cristóbal Dzib	Dzitbalche
Sebastián May	Pocboc
Pedro Mo	Pocboc
Juan Euan	Pocboc
Alonso Mo	Hecelchakan
Francisco Dzul	Hecelchakan
Gaspar Dzul	Hecelchakan
Antonio Ku	Hecelchakan
Francisco May	[did not know]
Cristóbal May	[did not know]
Gaspar May	[did not know]

Persons from Hecelchakan regularly visited Ixpimienta, taking offerings to the idols and to the native priests. Three such visitors he had seen were Francisco Kuyoc, Andrés Canche, and Pedro Uc.²⁸

While he was in Ixpimienta the inhabitants asked him about the health of Gaspar Kuyoc, the principal of Hopelchen, and about his wife; they also asked about two other inhabitants of Hopelchen, Francisco Puc and Gaspar Can.

Andrés described the path to Ixpimienta as had Kuyoc: about sixty leagues long and wide enough for one person to pass. There were eleven aguadas along the way, one surrounded by alabaster with many alligators in it.

Traders plied the route from the Hecelchakan region in Camino Real Alto (including nearby Calkini, Halacho, Dzitbalchen, and Pocboc) through Hopelchen on to Ixpimienta. It was these traders and their families and friends who were recruited to swell the ranks of the inhabitants of Ixpimienta. In addition, as we discover from later witnesses, a few inhabitants at Ixpimienta were also recruited from Ticul in the Sierra. On the other hand, we see that three of the four priests at Ixpimienta were from towns in the Sierra (including Mani and Tekax), Beneficios Bajos (Homun, within the orbit of Sotuta), as well as Camino Real Alto (Pocboc). The Sierra had long been an area suspected by the Spanish of harboring underground Maya priests, but I do not yet understand why their followers were largely from areas closer to Campeche.²⁹

The following witness was taken prisoner on March 15 at Hopelchen because of word that he had also been to Ixpimienta:

Luis Coh was from Hecelchakan, about forty years old; he was married to María Ye of the same town. He went to Ixpimienta about two years

earlier in the company of five men from Hecelchakan and another man who was now in prison in Mérida for having killed a Spaniard. His partners told him that they were going to gather wax, but once they were in the bush he noticed that they were carrying axes, machetes, knives, and salt. They told him not to ask where they were going until they arrived. Three days later they arrived in Ixpimienta, which was located on the bank of a river.

They first went to the house of the four priests, three of whom were the same individuals mentioned by Andrés Cob; Juan Pol was listed in place of Francisco Chi. His companions handed over all the merchandise they had brought with them to these four priests, telling Luis Couoh that they owed the goods from an earlier trip they had made to Ixpimienta. His partners and the priests then went to the temple, where they burned copal, performed ceremonies, and danced.³⁰ There were numerous men, women, and children in the temple. Following the ceremony a young man gave each of his companions half an arroba of wax.

Of those in Ixpimienta Luis claimed to know only Alonso Mo of Hecelchakan. He understood that many Indians had gone to settle there over the last two years.

Following these testimonies Mirones decided to head directly for Ixpimienta in order to put a stop to the "evil sect" of the ah k'inob, whom he concluded were the masterminds behind the attraction of the fugitives from the north and the kidnapping of men and women from the Christian towns. His Maya party at this point consisted of twenty-nine men from Oxkutzcab, twenty from Cauich, and twenty from Hopelchen; those from Hopelchen took their wives with them.³¹ These he paid in reales. He also planned to take six Spaniards, to whom he provided arms.³²

Before departing from Hopelchen, however, he decided to take testimony from four more witnesses, including a nineteen-year-old Spaniard, Juan Rojo del Castillo, whose father, Baltásar Rojo, was a vecino of Campeche. Juan, who lived in Hopelchen, had worked for four years at his brother's cattle estancia, located two leagues toward Hecelchakan from Hopelchen:³³

Juan Rojo del Castillo recounted that at midnight on the Thursday before Palm Sunday in 1621 he ran into six Indians while riding his horse back to his estancia from Hopelchen. These carried bows and arrows and wore their hair long, all the way to the back of their knees. They wore no clothes and carried no food or cargo.³⁴ As he came up to them they asked in Maya who he was, to which he responded, "I am a Spaniard." Flanking him three on each side of his horse, they inquired

whether he knew one Diego Kua, who lived in Hopelchen.³⁵ When he asked why they wanted to know, they said that Gaspar Kuyoc had sent them to kill Kua, because he had been "stirring up the vecinos and natives" of the town. They were from Ixpimienta, and thirty of their companions were spread out in three groups around the rancho, preparing to carry out the murder.

After they had left, Juan Rojo went to his estancia and then back to Hopelchen, where he found Kua and his wife at home. He took both of them to Bolonchen and then to Ticul, where they were still living. Kua and his wife told Rojo that Kuyoc had ordered their murder because he considered Kua to be a friend of the Spaniards, whom they served in Hopelchen. They said that Kuyoc traded with the inhabitants of Ixpimienta frequently, coming to his house or meeting him in a savannah half a league from the town, where he took them food and other goods to take back with them.

Kua stated that the inhabitants of Ixpimienta frequently visited and communicated with those of Hopelchen. Two years earlier they kidnapped the married daughter of Francisco Cituk, a shoemaker from Ticul who was then living in Hopelchen. During Holy Week of 1621 he had encountered two long-haired Mayas about half a league from the town while he was looking for livestock. They asked if he had any axes, machetes, or salt, as they were looking for some to take back to Ixpimienta. He had none, although they said that they would give him all the wax he wanted in return for these items. They left saying that they would return the following year at the same time in search of the same goods.

When he returned to the estancia after this last encounter, the foreman of the estancia, a Valladolid mulatto named Antón Biafara, told Rojo that he had encountered six long-haired Indians with bows and arrows who were on their way to Hecelchakan to carry out business there and to see their wives who were living there.

Francisco Cituk, the Ticul shoemaker, testified that two years earlier, while he was sick in bed, he noticed that his daughter was missing. This woman had been married for three years to one Juan Uluac of Ticul, and the couple had come together to live in Hopelchen. Not until four months later did he learn from Magdalena Chan, the wife of Mateo Keh, that she had been taken by Indians from Ixpimienta. She later ran away from Ixpimienta after learning that they wanted to kill her because she was old.

Magdalena Chan, who was in fact only about thirty years old, provided further details about the kidnapping of Lucía Cituk, the daughter of Francisco. At the time all this happened Magdalena was having an affair in Hopelchen with Cristóbal Can, a native of Hopelchen, while Lucía was having an affair with Gaspar Chi of Hecelchakan. One day, when all four of them were together in Magdalena's house, the two

men asked the women if they would like to go to the savannah half a league from the town, where they could eat wild *nances*³⁶ and amuse themselves. The rendezvous was to take place the next morning, and the women were instructed to leave before dawn.

However, once they had met in the savannah, their lovers started out with them on the path to Ixpimienta. About six leagues along the way they encountered ten Indians, seven of whom were from Hecelchakan. One of them had long hair and was named Copo. There they all talked, and the Hecelchakan group gave them monkey and armadillo meat to eat, telling the two women, "Don't worry, as you are going to a very good land where there is much to eat and where you will enjoy yourselves very much." As this party started on the path toward Ixpimienta they heard a noise that made them think they were being followed. At that moment the Indian with the long hair ordered them to follow him, threatening to kill any who did not. They managed to flee to the bush, where Magdalena and her lover, Cristóbal Can, hid for six months before finally returning to Hopelchen.

Four months after she had returned, she saw Copo, the long-haired Indian, in Hopelchen. He took away her father-in-law and one of his daughters. They spent more than twenty days in the savanna half a league from Hopelchen while Copo and his followers sent for many Indians from Hecelchakan, who apparently went with him to Ixpimienta.³⁷

The final witness was Cristóbal Chan, Magdalena's forty-year-old lover. He confirmed the contents of Magdalena's testimony, adding that the one who tricked him into going to Ixpimienta was not Copo, as Magdalena had reported, but rather one Francisco Yik of Hecelchakan.³⁸ Copo's first name was Pedro.

With all this knowledge in hand, Mirones departed from Hopelchen on March 30 with a total of 140 Mayas and his 20 Spaniards. As he left he received a letter from Governor Cárdenas stating that the Franciscan provincial was sending along a fully equipped friar who would administer sacraments and preach to the apostates of Ixpimienta and to others in the area.

Through Fugitive Territory to Ixpimienta

On the first night some of this party camped at an aguada, where Mirones waited for three days for the rest to catch up and for the trail ahead to be blazed. They made two camps, between which he had a cross put up on a large *ceiba* tree.³⁹ He named the place San Segundo in honor of the day of the saint on which he arrived. The party began to decamp on April 1, and he departed two days later. At that moment he received a letter from Fray Diego Delgado, who said that he would join

him via Hopelchen as soon as possible. Some of his Spanish soldiers had served in La Florida while Delgado was there and spoke highly of the "great love of God" he had shown there and of "the much gratefulness from the natives [of Florida] by whom he was loved and esteemed." Mirones sent a squadron of men to meet Delgado at Hopelchen.

On April 3 Mirones caught up with his party at a large aguada, where his men had found a clay idol, signs of copal burning, and two drums [*tunkules*], indicating that the place was often visited. He erected another cross and prayed in the name of Santa Teodora, whose day it was. Delgado joined him on April 5, and Mirones arranged a military greeting for the friar "with all the infantry having their arms in their hands and a trumpet and drum salute." He claimed that the Mayas of Hopelchen among his party were delighted to see Delgado, as he had been "their first father and he had brought them together and settled them in . . . Hopelchen when they were without doctrine and scattered throughout the forest." As for Mirones, he knelt before the humble Franciscan and kissed his habit. Mirones's joy at Delgado's arrival was clearly due to his perception that without Delgado many of the Indians in his party would have run away. Delgado, anxious to cooperate, preached a sermon to the Indians, telling them that, in addition to Mirones's payment to them, they would be paid by God "with His glory."

Nonetheless, some thirty Indians did run away at that point, and the job of clearing the path appeared hopeless. Mirones sent his squadron corporal, Andrés de Ortega, with orders to bring another forty Indians from Oxkutzcab and forty from Ticul to help clear the road and bring in more supplies.

On April 6 he and his party departed in search of an aguada said to have many alligators in it. The aguada was found to be dried up, with the alligators dead from lack of water. They camped there, unable to find any water, naming the place Santa Eufemia for the day of its discovery. Two days later he sent most of the soldiers and baggage back to the aguada named Santa Teodora and continued on with Delgado in search of a large aguada said to be twelve leagues further along toward Ixpimienta. They were accompanied by eight soldiers and the last 15 of the original 150 Indians who had not yet run away.

They reached this aguada on Sunday, April 10. It was dry, but they found water by digging in it. Delgado decided to go by himself into the forest and carry out a ritual in thanks for the appearance of the water, which they deemed to be a miracle. They erected a cross and named the place Santa Casilda.

On Monday Mirones went in search of the aguada with alabaster that

one of the witnesses had mentioned. He finally reached it on Wednesday but was disappointed to find it dry. He described the aguada as "more than a league and a half long and fifty paces wide at its smallest point and between two impregnable sierras [ranges of hills]." He and Delgado agreed that the alabaster was in fact gypsum; it was located on the higher of the two sierras at the end of the lake or aguada, which he named San Emerjildo Rey.⁴⁰ Along the way they had passed two smaller aguadas between which they placed another cross. On Tuesday he had received a supply of wine and k'oyem (the maize paste from which pozol is made) from the base camp at Santa Teodora and ordered that the troops and baggage he had left there be sent back to Hopelchen, except for four Spanish soldiers. Finally, on April 15, they managed to dig a hole deep enough on the shore of the aguada to find water.

The aguada of San Emerjildo Rey was close enough to Ixpimienta to send an advance party of three Mayas on April 14 with letters from Mirones and Fray Diego. At the head of this party was Bartolomé Keh from Sahcabchen, whose brother, Diego Keh, was one of the four ah k'inob as well as the principal leader at Ixpimienta. With him went Gaspar Yam of Oxkutzcab and another Diego Keh of Ticul. Mirones's letter promised the inhabitants of Ixpimienta gifts, gentle treatment, amnesty, and resettlement at a place of their choice if they submitted peacefully; furthermore, they would enjoy a ten-year holiday from tribute payments, following which their tribute would be paid to the crown.⁴¹ If they did not receive the Spaniards peacefully, however, Mirones "would enter into their town with the harshness that their infidelity and apostacy deserved." As for Delgado's letter, Mirones wrote that it "was so religious and spiritual that if the stones could be moved it would move them."

This party returned on April 23, having failed to reach Ixpimienta. On the afternoon of their departure they had met two men, two women, and a boy from Ixpimienta who told them "that they had had word a year ago that the Spaniards were going to enter into their town and that they were afraid that they would imprison them and punish them for their crimes and that they were prepared to receive them." After they had travelled a full day with this group toward Ixpimienta they became lost in a burned-out savannah and were deserted by their Ixpimienta guides. At this point they were within seven leagues of their destination, but it took them several days to find their way back to the camp.

Contact with Ixpimienta

By Thursday, April 28, ten of the few Mayas who remained with Mirones's party had run away, and there was no word of the arrival

of the eighty additional Indians he had ordered from Oxkutzcab and Ticul.⁴² In this sorry condition Mirones and Delgado decided to push on ahead toward Ixpimienta with eight armed Spaniards and five Mayas. With so few carriers, even the soldiers had to carry some of the supplies. Any plans of opening a new road had long since been abandoned. That afternoon they camped five leagues further on and received word that his squadron corporal was on his way with forty Indians and additional supplies.⁴³

The next day he sent four Spanish scouts ahead to reconnoiter the path. These soon met up with a Maya man, his wife, his daughter, and her one-year-old infant. The parents had run away from Hecelchakan five years earlier. The father could not recall the friar who had married them, but he recalled that three years ago Fray Juan de Esquivel had married his daughter to Pedro Ake, whose present whereabouts were unknown. The scouts brought this family back to the camp, where the parents recognized Fray Diego as the priest who had married them. Delgado absolved the parents of their apostacy and said mass for them. Mirones apparently kept the family with him, but three of the Mayas in his party went on to Ixpimienta with the undelivered letters and gifts, accompanied by three Spaniards. Among these Mayas was Gaspar Chan, the *alcalde ordinario* of Oxkutzcab.

On Monday (May 2) Mirones and Delgado reached a dried-up aguada and were met along the way by the three Spaniards and four Mayas who had gone ahead to break trail and accompany those who were carrying the letters to Ixpimienta. This party had discovered a small settlement of six or eight houses, located on a river called Uenzanha (*wen sam ha'*, or white shore river), probably the Río Ukum, a tributary of the Río Hondo.) In one of these houses they had found thirty-one idols, many "*bateas*" ("instruments of idolatry which the inhabitants of these parts are accustomed to using" — presumably ceremonial flint or chert daggers),⁴⁴ and some *tablas* (boards or benches) "on which they make offerings to such idols." At this point they had parted from the family, which went on ahead to Ixpimienta.

Tuesday, May 3, was the Day of the Exaltation of the Cross, in honor of which Fray Diego said mass before dawn and led a religious celebration before a cross erected by Mirones. They went on ahead to the settlement and found the idols, "all the rest of the instruments of idolatry," and many shields and arrows that had been left behind. The idols they burned and threw into the river, but the houses served them as comfortable lodgings. Mirones named the town Santa Cruz del Río.

The Oxkutzcab *alcalde* Gaspar Chan arrived at this hamlet the next

day, reporting that behind him were coming his two companions and six principales and five "macehuales" ("commoner" Indians) from Ixpimienta.⁴⁵ These were ready to seek conversion and submit to the crown. Chan said that when the three messengers had arrived in Ixpimienta, they were taken prisoner, tied up, and threatened with a trial. When they announced that they brought the letters and gifts, however, they were released. The letters were read and the gifts received; in turn those of Ixpimienta presented gifts to the messengers. Although wary of being taken prisoner, several agreed to see Mirones.

Fray Diego left a gift of food for the visitors along the trail and found them about a musket's shot into the forest. Assuring them of their safety he brought them to the camp and

before an altar with the Mother of God, beneath a large awning, he said mass. He gave thanks to God and preached to the said Indians, who were on their knees. He brought them to see me, and I received them as graciously as I could and gave them some presents. Through Diego Manrique de Lara [the interpreter] I assured them that what was contained in the letters would be complied with, and I told them that they should give many thanks to God and be loyal vassals and tributaries of the king, my lord.

The next day these eleven were absolved by the friar, "because they asked him to." Mass was said again. Mirones allowed the six principales to return to Ixpimienta to prepare for the Spaniards' arrival, but he kept the other five with him.

A Warm Welcome at Ixpimienta

The reception the next day at Ixpimienta was a well-staged event indeed:

Friday, which would be the sixth of May at twelve o'clock I entered the town of Ixpimienta and was received surrounded by Indian men and women with their palm fronds in their hands and a cross at the entrance to the town, before which we all knelt and gave thanks to the Divine Majesty for such great mercies and gifts that we might arrive at this town where he may be served and worshipped, putting an end to the worship and falsehoods of the devil.

On Saturday morning mass in honor of the Mother of God was said in Ixpimienta, and Mirones declared the name of the town to be La Concepción de la Pimienta and "its avocation and principal fiesta to be that

of the Mother of God, so that she might be the intercessor for these souls and ask of her precious son that from this time henceforth they serve him as our true God."

On Sunday, eighteen children eight years and younger were baptized. By Monday the roofs for the new Ixpimienta church and the friars' house were completed.⁴⁶ On Friday the 13th of May a very large milpa was planted "at my cost" for the soldiers and friars. The friars (whom Mirones now imagined in the plural) would be occupied in converting souls within a radius of four or five leagues.

The reduction of the surrounding area began on Sunday the 15th, when eight soldiers went to a place called El Zia, where the inhabitants were reported ready to be converted and settled in Ixpimienta.⁴⁷

Mirones's next and final entry was two weeks later:

On May 31 the said Spaniards returned and brought fourteen Indians named Copo, who were born in the town of Hecelchakan of the province of Yucatan. They said they were baptized and that they had left the said town with their parents, who had died in these forests. The father chaplain absolved them and their wives of their apostasy and gave the holy baptism to the children of eight years and under. The said Indians agreed to be good Christians and loyal vassals of His Majesty as his tributaries.

This apparent extended family must have been related to Pedro Copo, who had earlier been identified at Hopelchen as a recruiter of potential followers for the Ixpimienta settlements. His reputation and that of his family must have convinced Delgado and Mirones to bring them into the reduction town as soon as possible. Although the use of force is not mentioned in Mirones's journal, the fact that it took so long to bring these people to Ixpimienta suggests that their arrival was not voluntary.

SACALUM AND THE TRAGEDIES OF RECONQUEST

Delgado's Disaffection

Over the next months Mirones and Delgado must have been occupied primarily in congregating the surrounding settlements in Ixpimienta. At some point Mirones decided to move their headquarters at Ixpimienta to Sacalum, which was further along the proposed road to Tah Itza—possibly at or near the site of the mission town later known as Chanchanha or Chichanha. Cárdenas Valencia claimed that the reduced inhabitants

of Ixpimienta went along willingly, but we can assume that they had little choice in the matter.⁴⁸ Although Mirones's reinforcements were slow in coming, Sacalum soon became a small armed camp. Its inhabitants, according to accusations leveled by López de Cogolludo, were subjected to forced trade of the sort that was commonly practiced under the designation of repartimientos elsewhere in Yucatan.⁴⁹

Delgado sought to stop this commercial activity, as "the time of conquest was not that of trade" and the resultant displeasure of the Indians could make it difficult to pursue what they had begun. As Mirones continued to pursue these activities, his differences with Fray Diego became public knowledge. The Mayas began to show signs of impatience, especially when they learned that Captain Juan Bernardo Casanova was in Mani, ready to march with fifty more soldiers to join Mirones's troops in Sacalum.

In early 1623 Delgado wrote of the situation to the provincial in Mérida, asking whether he should stay on with Mirones. The provincial's companion, Fray José Narváez, wrote back, advising him that such an armed entrada to the Itzas was prohibited by the king and that the council had yet to advise differently.⁵⁰ Delgado, therefore, was under no obligation to follow Mirones's orders. If Delgado could not remedy the situation, he should do as God inspired him in the best interests of the Indians' souls.

Tipu, Tah Itza, and the First Massacre

With this advice, Delgado decided secretly to leave Mirones and go himself to the Itzas with most of the remaining Indians who had accompanied him from Hecelchakan. He cut directly through the forest to Tipu, carried by his Indians. Mirones, knowing the condition of his journey, sent twelve soldiers led by his corporal Fulano de Acosta; if these were unable to convince Delgado to return to Sacalum, they were to follow him where he went. They met up with Delgado before he had reached Tipu. Finding him unwilling to return to Sacalum, they accompanied him on to Tipu as they had been instructed.

Like Fuensalida and Orbita before him, Delgado sent a message to the Itzas that he was there and wanted to go to see them. Still the cacique of Tipu, Don Cristóbal Na offered to accompany Delgado, just as he had assisted Fuensalida and Orbita. Once at Tah Itza he told the Itzas that there were only a few Spaniards with Delgado, and the Itzas granted Delgado permission to visit the island. After returning to Tipu, Na prepared provisions for Delgado, his Maya companions, and the Spanish

soldiers, recruiting eighty inhabitants of Tipu to help carry the Spaniards' baggage.

Upon the party's arrival at the lake in July 1623, the Itzas sent canoes for them and took them to the island, where they appeared to receive them peacefully. No sooner than the visitors had arrived, however, "everyone in the town" fell on the Spaniards and the Tipuans, who were unable to defend themselves.⁵¹ They manacled all of them and soon thereafter killed the Spanish soldiers and the Tipuans, "offering the hearts they had just torn out to their idols." They nailed the heads of their victims to stakes which they placed on a small hill in view of the town. Afterwards they told Delgado that they also planned to kill him because he had not come alone⁵² and because the friars who had come before had broken their idol and taken away their gods: "They said this, it is said, because of some idols that padre Fuensalida took to Mérida the first time he was with them; but in his account . . . he does not say that he took idols from them, only that they gave him some."

Delgado was to pay, then, for Orbita's rashness. The Itzas reportedly opened Delgado's chest and took out his heart, offering it to the idols "in recompense and satisfaction of the insult that they said the other religious had committed." Up to that point Delgado had been courageously preaching to them. They cut his body into pieces and put his head on a stake with the others on the hill—precisely the same treatment received by convicted Maya rebels at the hands of the Spanish. López de Cogolludo reported that the "good cacique" of Tipu also lost his life while also demanding their conversion. This was the third time that he had accompanied Franciscan friars to Tah Itza.

The Rescue Mission

Worried about the fate of Delgado and the soldiers, Mirones at some point sent two Spaniards with several Mayas to Tipu, including one of his servants, a hispanized Maya named Bernardino Ek who was to serve as their interpreter and guide.⁵³ These were to go to the Itzas to check on Delgado; if the Itzas were peaceful, they were to remain there with him.

Arriving at Tipu, the party learned what had befallen Delgado and the others, but they went on obediently to the shore of the lake, where they made a signal fire to request passage. Seeing the smoke, a party in canoes came toward them and took them to the island. There the Itzas put them in manacles and placed them in a strongly palisaded corral. Three days later a large party armed with bows and arrows came and

took them off with much shouting to the town and then to the hill where the heads of Delgado and the others were displayed. Then they returned them to the palisade, where they were to be sacrificed the next day.

The Itzas stayed near them that night, "dancing, idolatrizing, and drinking their beverages." They fell asleep eventually, some because they were drunk and others from fatigue. While all was quiet, the Spaniards told Ek that they should try to escape; the three of them managed to untie their bindings. First Ek went out and stayed nearby to wait for them. But the other two were not able to climb the palisade because their hands were so dislocated from the bindings. One of them slipped just as he reached the top of the palisade and fell back into the corral. At the sound of his fall, the guards were alerted and shouted out; upon hearing them Ek got into an old canoe that he found on the beach and "rowing it with a paddle as one flees from such danger," he managed to escape with the Itzas in hot pursuit. Reaching the mainland he hid and went on to Tipu.

Ek later went to Bacalar, where he gave an account of what had happened. The alcalde sent his deposition to Governor Cárdenas and sent Ek ahead to Sacalum, where he provided the same account and warned Mirones of the dangers that he now faced. It was assumed that the Spaniards he left behind must have been sacrificed like the others, for they were never heard from again. What happened to Ek's Maya companions from Sacalum is likewise unrecorded.

The Massacre at Sacalum

In the words of López de Cogolludo:

So that conquest ended just as unfortunately as it had begun. The outcome was brought on by greed, the desire to deal with those Indians, newly reduced by the father Fray Diego Delgado, with the oppression with which some merchants of the governors whom the Indians call jueces (and this captain was that of the Costa) are accustomed to treating them.⁵⁴

Following Delgado's departure from Sacalum, Mirones wrote a letter of complaint to the accountant Juan de Equiluz, his agent in Mérida, asking him to request another friar from the provincial. Fray Juan Berrio was chosen to go to Sacalum, but after fifteen days there, disillusioned by the behavior of the captain and his soldiers, he returned to Mérida without even informing Mirones. Mirones wrote again to Equiluz, requesting

yet another friar. This time the provincial refused due to conditions at Sacalum.

Unable to obtain a Franciscan, Mirones asked for a secular priest. The governor refused this, insisting that the provincial send a religious. Finally the provincial decided to send two Franciscans, Fray Juan de Loaysa, a creole from Mérida fluent in Maya, and Fray José Narváez, a creole from Mexico and "son of this holy province" who had corresponded earlier with Delgado. It was thought that these would work under Delgado, of whose fate they had not yet learned.

Equiluz delayed in preparing Loaysa and Narváez for their departure, however, even after they had been named. Meanwhile Fray Juan Henríquez, a native of Cádiz who had been ordained in the convent in Mérida in 1615, volunteered to go to Sacalum himself. He had earlier tried to obtain a position as a guardian but had been refused, so he saw this as an opportunity to achieve the higher status. He did obtain the license to go, although he knew as he departed that the mission was dangerous and that he might never return; Fray Juan Berrio had reported that the Indians of Sacalum had reached a point of exasperation with the actions of Mirones and his soldiers.

Meanwhile Cárdenas had received the declaration by Bernardino Ek from Bacalar concerning the fate of Delgado's and Ek's parties. Concerned that Mirones and his soldiers were so close to the Itzas, he sent instructions that Ek be sent from Bacalar to Sacalum to inform Mirones of what had happened. He also issued an order to Captain Juan Bernardo Casanova to march quickly from Mani to reinforce those at Sacalum.⁵⁵ He asked the provincial that Fray Juan Fernández, a lay-brother who had served as a soldier in La Florida, accompany Casanova.

Before Casanova's party left Mani with his soldiers and Fernández, Bernardino Ek arrived at Sacalum and gave his account to Mirones. Thinking that Ek was lying, he had him tortured. No other news arrived to make him think otherwise.

One day—probably Sunday, January 27—the soldiers went to the church almost completely unarmed, leaving only one soldier to keep guard and watch over the arms.⁵⁶ Seizing the opportunity the Indians went to the guard post, manacled the guard, and took all the arms. From there, disguised with painted faces and shouting, they went to the church and grabbed the defenseless Spaniards.⁵⁷

Fray Juan Henríquez, who had not finished saying mass, swallowed the bread and wine and, turning around from the altar to face the people, saw the attackers tying up the Spaniards. He asked their leader, the

Maya priest Ah Kin Pol, to give them time to die as Christians and let them be confessed. And so they did, "speaking their sins out loud." We may assume that this is the same Juan Pol who had been identified by a witness in Hopelchen as one of Ixpimienta's four high priests. Having heard enough of these prayers, Pol approached Mirones, who had been tied to one of the posts that supported the thatched roof of the church nave. Taking the dagger from his belt, he stabbed the captain, opened up his chest, and pulled out his heart with his hand. He proceeded to mete out the same treatment to the rest of the Spaniards.

While this was happening, other attackers had tied Fray Juan to another church post in front of the captain's; these, however, wanted to release him and let him live. But Ah Kin Pol, "without saying a thing," stabbed him and took out his heart just as he had done to Mirones. The priest had been preaching spiritedly at him throughout this time about "the impiety that was being committed in these murders and about the error of their idolatries." They threw the bodies of Fray Juan and Mirones in a hole of white earth, leaving them there. The rest they carried to the crossroads by which the other Spaniards came and left their bodies impaled on stakes. After burning the town and church they fled to the forest.

The Aftermath of the Massacre

As the massacre at Sacalum was occurring, López de Cogolludo reports that Juan Bernardo Casanova was already on his way with reinforcements from Mani to Sacalum, accompanied by Fray Juan Fernández. Fernández and two soldiers had gone on ahead and were about three days from Sacalum when they met some Mayas walking along with the mule on which Fray Juan Enríquez himself had gone to Sacalum. These told the Spaniards that Fray Juan had sent them to Mérida for wine and other supplies, so they were allowed to pass. Later realizing their mistake, the soldiers tried unsuccessfully to find them.

At this point in his account López de Cogolludo tells us that, smelling a rat, Fray Juan Fernández and the two soldiers went ahead to Sacalum and found "that miserable spectacle." They hurried back to tell Casanova, who was by now one day from Sacalum. All of them then arrived and buried the dead in the hole which contained the bodies of Fray Juan Enríquez and Mirones, then returned to Mérida.

This brief account, however, hardly does justice to the richly detailed documents that were presented in 1627 by Captain Juan Bernardo Casanova in support of his claim for a reward for his services in attempting to rescue Mirones.⁵⁸ Casanova was an experienced soldier and regidor of

Valladolid when, on 21 September 1622, Governor Cárdenas named him captain of an infantry company that he was to assemble to search for Mirones's whereabouts in the forests of Ixpimienta. Although he published notices seeking recruits as early as 30 September 1622, he was apparently not instructed to set out to reinforce Mirones and carry supplies to Sacalum until after Cárdenas had received news of the July 1623 massacre at Tah Itza. In the meantime he and his troops waited in Mani.

Casanova must have received his new orders in mid-December, as he published his infantry lists between 24 December 1623 and 11 January 1624. At some point early in his preparations to march to Sacalum he must have received the following desperate letter from Mirones, written from San Felipe de Sacalum on 26 December:⁵⁹

I leave for the Cehaches without leaving a single man in this place. There is no maize here. There is some in Dza,⁶⁰ eight leagues from this town. The horses and containers to carry it in are in Texan on the road from Noa.⁶¹ Please, sir, order ahead two soldiers, one an interpreter, to make them bring it, with a letter for me. On receiving it I shall return [to Sacalum] as soon as possible. May God protect your grace many years. From San Felipe, twenty-sixth of December of sixteen twenty-three. Friend of your grace, Francisco de Mirones y Lescano. And in the outskirts of [the town]. To Captain Juan Bernardo Casanova. Protect our captain of the Spanish infantry of this new reduction.

Not until the last days of January was Casanova close enough to grant Mirones's request and send ahead to Sacalum his sergeant major Juan de Honorato, a soldier named Alonso Martínez, and Juan Lucero, an interpreter. These were to notify Mirones of the arrival of the supply party. They arrived at Sacalum at four in the afternoon on 29 January and found the grisly sight. Quickly returning to meet Casanova at a rancho called Pucte, they testified on February 1 as to what they had witnessed.

At the second cross posted at the entrance to Sacalum they had seen nine or ten bodies, two of them women. The men had been impaled through their rectums and the women through their vaginas. They had been decapitated, but some of the heads were missing. Honorato recognized three of these as the mulatta María de Molina, a twelve-year-old boy named Juan de Valdés, and a drummer named Juan de Sevilla. The interpreter Lucero knew that some of the bodies were those of Spaniards because their riding-horse mounts⁶² had been left in front of them. Further on they discovered the body of a burned mule that may have belonged to Mirones and another mule that was suffering. In the center of

town they found that fire had destroyed the church, the military headquarters, and various houses.

With this horrifying report, which turned out to have been somewhat garbled, Casanova set off the next day with his men. They stopped at a settlement along the way called Tucaxanhamay. The next day, 3 February, he and fifteen men went on ahead of those carrying the supplies to Sacalum. These shot at three Maya spies the first night but were unable to aim because of the darkness. The second night they spent at a place called Rancho de Simón, two leagues from Sacalum.

Arriving at midday on 5 February they first saw three bodies staked by their rectums at the cross posted at the entrance to the town. Two of the bodies had been bound and burned; the soldiers once again recognized these by their heads, which were at the foot of the cross, as the boy Juan de Valdés and Juan de Sevilla, who was a mulatto. Next to these two heads were eight others belonging to a Spaniard named Juan de Lizardo, two women, and five Indians. Further on they found the church, military headquarters, and houses destroyed by fire. Behind the ruins of the church, where they went to pray, they discovered a cave in which they found four headless and burned bodies of Spanish men. In another cave next to the military headquarters were four more headless Spanish men; deeper in the cave were bodies of women and of others whom they were not able to extricate. They found that a number of people had been burned to death in the military headquarters, including some Indians.

In front of a house that was identified as belonging to Mirones they found a gallows in front of which was an altar made of poles, about one *estado* (about six feet) in height. On it was an "idol" and burned copal and a pallet (tablilla) on which were the remains of twenty-nine copal candles; underneath was a hole filled with fresh-appearing blood-soaked branches and leaves with a bundle of stakes used by the Spanish soldiers. They concluded that some sort of sacrifice had been carried out recently due to the freshness of the blood. Scattered throughout the town were numerous gallows. Two burned mules lay dead in the plaza, and a horse and other animals wounded by fire and arrows wandered about. In the burned military headquarters they found cannons, harquebuses, and muskets lying around. The boxes in which they had been stored appeared to have burned up. In the ashes were pieces of iron that appeared to have been from trunks, boxes, and stirrups.

Unable to identify Mirones himself among the headless bodies, they decided not to bury the dead until the rest of the soldiers arrived, hoping that someone among them would be able to recognize his body.

These arrived the same day, and several witnesses were able to identify Mirones, whose body had been decapitated, his left chest cut open and his heart apparently removed, and his hands and feet tied with a tunic. His body was partially burned. These witnesses swore that they had seen him nude on various occasions and could also identify his hands and feet.

At three in the afternoon Mirones was buried with military honors. They were never able to find his head or those of any of the Spanish soldiers whose bodies had been discovered. Only the heads of two Spanish boys, including Juan Lizardo, were found. Nowhere in the documents is there mention of any effort to find Fray Juan Enríquez. Fray Juan Fernández personally broke into pieces the idol that had been found and assisted in burying the dead.

A letter written in Maya was found in a small house, along with a banner decorated with the Virgin on one side and San Juan Bautista on the other. The latter had been partially burned and rubbed in dirt; it was washed off with rosewater by Casanova and Fray Juan. Only the Spanish translation of the letter survives, which I have translated loosely following the original text in the verse form into which it seems to fall, perhaps reflecting some of the spirit of the Maya original:

Our Lord God grant you
 long and happy years,
Sirs,
 as your health will be
That which Our Lord God
 has given you.
Our sirs, our own is dying
 and may live
By the mercy
 of God all powerful.
Sirs,
 it pleased us very much
When we heard
 that you were well.
By God's will, Sirs
 we are fairly well.
That you may know
 that we received here
The paper
 that you wrote to us.
And that we did all
 that you ordered us

By order
 of the alcalde.
 And it was offered to us
 to write you a piece of paper
 So that you might know
 that we are going there
 To hear the news
 of that which is happening there.
 My Sirs,
 await us there
 If God
 grants us life.
 That his will that sustains us
 may not delay,
 And that with that will
 may our Lord God protect all,
 Our old ones,
 and our maestro.
 Your servant,
 Don Agustín Zima, governor.
 Sebastián Dzib,
 alcalde.
 Diego Yam,
 regidor.
 To our beloved
 and honest men.
 Don Diego Cay,
 who is in the pueblo
 That San Felipe
 watches over.

All four of the senders named in this letter had been identified as inhabitants of Ixpimienta by witnesses who testified before Mirones at Hopelchen. Whether they wrote the letter from Ixpimienta or from another town is not specified. Don Agustín Zima and Sebastián Dzib were from Dzitbalche, north of Hecelchakan. Diego Yam was from Mani. Don Diego Cay must have been the same person as Diego Keh of Pocboc, a visita of Hecelchakan. Yam and Keh had both been identified as two of the four ah k'inob of Ixpimienta.

This letter, its message couched in the formalities of greeting typical of such Maya correspondence, appears to be addressed by the governor (Don Agustín Zima), alcalde (Sebastián Dzib), and a regidor (Diego Yam) of one community to the governor (Don Diego Keh) of San Felipe de

Sacalum. The text both acknowledges receipt of a letter containing instructions from Keh and announces that the three senders will soon visit Keh "to hear the news of that which is happening there." "That his will that sustains us may not delay" may refer simply to their intention to make the visit. It is more likely a reference to the plot that was brewing to murder the Spaniards, however.

I interpret this letter as a carefully coded agreement to carry through the plans for the massacre. It was probably sent from Ixpimienta, which, if so, had not been abandoned in the move of Mirones's troops to Sacalum. Not surprisingly, it was introduced as evidence by Mirones in the context of his contention that "by the strategy in which they have been engaged there have been many towns that have plotted together."

The reference to "our maestro" suggests the presence at one of these towns of a maestro cantor or maestro de capilla—an individual responsible for overseeing Christian religious activities in the absence of a Spanish priest.⁶³ If this is the case, we see in this region what is common in Maya towns in many places throughout at least the first two centuries of the colonial era: the simultaneous formal acknowledgement of Maya and Christian religious practice as part of a wider sphere of religious unity. The Sacalum massacre, despite its desecration of Spanish Christian images and the murder of a friar, was less a denial of the role of Christianity in Maya life than a true anti-Spanish rebellion.

SPANISH REVENGE

Rumors abounded that the perpetrators of the Sacalum massacre together with inhabitants of the towns of the Sierra were plotting an attack against the Spanish on Jueves Santo. Over the next two months Casanova and another captain, Antonio Méndez de Canzo, stationed Spanish troops in Oxkutzcab, Mani, and Tekax. Rewards were offered for anyone who could capture Ah Kin Pol, who was reputed to have been the principal leader behind the massacre and to have had a wide following throughout the Sierra towns.⁶⁴

Méndez de Canzo commissioned the Maya governor of Oxkutzcab, Don Fernando Camal, and 150 Oxkutzcab Mayas with bows and arrows to track down Pol and his followers in the forests near Sacalum. Camal's troops were successful. They found Pol and the others with the chalices and silver wine vessels from the Sacalum church as well as silver dishes, a silver-plated dagger, and some clothing belonging to Mirones. In their petition for a reward for their services, Camal and his followers claimed to have killed 20 Mayas including "four captains." They captured 12 men

and 38 women and children.⁶⁵ About 24 of the Oxkutzcab Mayas must have died in the battles in the forest, as of these 150 only 126 signed the petition.

Pol and others were dragged back to Canzo, who claimed to have tried the prisoners. The prisoners testified to the events of the massacre, presumably under torture, but their account has survived only in summary form in the text of López de Cogolludo. They were then hanged, dragged through the streets, and drawn and quartered. Their heads were cut off and displayed in the plazas of the towns of the Sierra. The punishment was almost the same as that administered in Sacalum and at Tah Itza—only the hearts were not removed as a sacrificial offering.⁶⁶

So great were the Spanish suspicions of an imminent uprising that even Maya wax-traders arriving from the forest at Tizimin, near Chancénote, long reputed to be a "den of idolators," were arrested and sent to the Valladolid jail. This was a long, long way from Mani or Sacalum, but no Indian outside his assigned village was to be trusted.⁶⁷

One hundred and twenty-six Oxkutzcab Mayas who had participated in the murder and capture of the perpetrators of the rebellion were rewarded by Governor Cárdenas on 29 July 1624 with exemption from compulsory weekly and rotational community labor;⁶⁸ from payment by them or their children of the one-real holpatan tax; and from payment of the twenty-cacao community tax.⁶⁹ They were also to be extended "all the honors and preeminences, extensions and liberties which are enjoyed and held by the descendants of caciques and native lords." From then on they were to pay only the tributes of mantas, maize, and fowls to their encomendero. Camal was ordered to set aside a section of the town where they might live more comfortably and where—most importantly—they could be called on easily in any future situation where their military services could be used. Don Fernando Camal received the special title of *ah chun tan*, which would be passed on to his descendants.⁷⁰

Despite the cooperation of the Oxkutzcab Mayas, it was later claimed that the massacre at Sacalum involved a conspiracy between the forest Mayas and those of the Sierra.⁷¹ There is no documentation for this claim, as the trial records have not been located. There were certainly Sierra Mayas living in the Ixpimienta area, some of whom held important positions; the claim is more than plausible, especially in light of the rapidity with which information from Mérida moved through the forests to Ixpimienta.

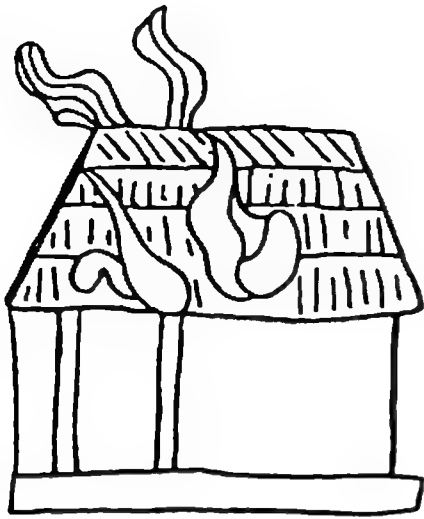
Although no "conspiracy" may have been formed between the Ixpimienta and the Tipu and Tah Itza regions, there is no doubt that intelligence was frequently shared among Maya leaders of all these areas.

Similar but unusual events happened in relatively quick succession in widely separated places. The sharing of information and even strategies must have been important, but no less important was the apparent sharing of cultural assumptions about how the Spanish and their Maya allies should be treated. The massacres of 1623–1624 at Tah Itza and Sacalum are a major departure from previous Maya strategies of rebellion. Not since 1546 had execution as a tool of rebellion on such a large scale been seen in Yucatan. This was Katun 3 Ahau, a time of violent denial of the right of Spaniards to impose their control over the fugitive and independent Maya zones. Such assumptions were shared widely throughout the southern forests.

EPILOGUE

The Council of the Indies issued a cédula to Governor Diego de Cárdenas on 18 November 1624, responding to his news of the Sacalum massacre. The cédula makes it clear that the king opposed the armed conquest of these regions of Tah Itza and Lacandon in favor of “teaching them the evangelical word.” Cárdenas is instructed in terse phrases not to continue what had begun.

7: KATUN 1 AHAU: RESISTANCE



They were to give obedience to their king and wished them to abandon their town, saying that if they did not do so all would die and be finished, because at such a time the Itzas would come to kill them and there would be many deaths, and hurricanes would flood the land.¹

And that will be the ending of words:

The great war.

Risen will be the Chan

And the Tihosuco plain.

Who will fight

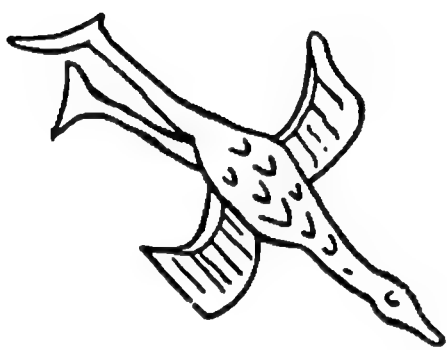
The Chan War

Of the 1 Ahau

Katun.

Fires

And hurricane rains are the burden of the katun.²



PROPHECY REVISITED

Maya prophets had long concerned themselves with the politics of resistance to Spanish colonial rule. Each of the above quotations speaks to events that were prophesied for Katun 1 Ahau, the period of about twenty years that was to begin in 1638. The first was reported by the Spanish cabildo at Salamanca de Bacalar in September of that year and spoke to warnings by the leaders of Tipu to the Maya villagers of Belize, encouraging them to abandon their towns and join the resistance at Tipu. The second was recorded in the *Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin* and clearly refers to the same prophecy, although it is worded in more global terms.

Reports of prophecy as a stimulus for anticolonial resistance ap-

peared frequently throughout the seventeenth century, forcing us to consider the cultural discourse of Maya resistance, the political mechanisms through which resistance was organized, and the political-economic conditions that stimulated this resistance. In Chapters 5 and 6 we examined some of these issues as they unfolded during Katun 3 Ahau, resulting in the expulsion of Franciscan friars from Tah Itza in 1618 and 1619; in the discovery of "idolatry" at Tipu in 1619; in the murder of another Franciscan, along with eighty Tipuans, Spanish soldiers, and other Mayas at Tah Itza in 1623; in the massacre of Spaniards and Mayas at San Felipe Sacalum in 1624; and, finally, in the capture and execution of Ixpimienta-area Maya leaders by the Spanish in the same year.

All of these events, along with others to be considered shortly, were the prelude to the dramatic collapse of Spanish control over most of the Maya towns of the Bacalar province beginning in 1638, the opening year of Katun 1 Ahau. This loss of colonial control was by 1642 replaced by a regenerated Maya leadership based at Tipu. In some of its aspects this revival of Maya control over what is today the northern half of Belize was a replay of the events of 1568, when on the eve of Katun 9 Ahau a rebellion centered at Tipu swiftly brought on Spanish retaliation by Juan Garzón by means of his ambitious entrada into central and southern Belize, described in Chapter 2.

Spanish fears in 1624 of a general uprising in the Sierra were probably unfounded, as Maya strategies of rebellion were aimed at protecting Itza autonomy and a wide territory of unconquered rebels across the north and east of Itza territory. The events surrounding the Sacalum massacre of 1624 undoubtedly contributed to the rebellion of 1638. We may assume, I believe, that all of the preceding events were closely interconnected and coordinated under the most powerful conservative factions around Tah Itza—leaders who had always opposed Can Ek's peaceful overtures to the Spanish on the basis of his interpretation of prophecies of capitulation implicit in Katun 3 Ahau, which began in 1618.

As the year 1638 ushered in Katun 1 Ahau, the prophecies suggested a time of natural disaster and rebellion. The events of the period were focused around Tipu, the ancient capital of Dzuluinicob, but there is also evidence for the involvement of leaders at Tah Itza. Tipuans, who for a brief time had been cooperative with Spanish designs on the Itzas, now began to join forces with anti-Spanish factions at Tah Itza, ultimately enjoying full success in their efforts to remove Spanish influence from the province.

The first phase of this new alliance indicates that prophecies of an impending Itza conquest over the Maya towns of the Bacalar province

were being funnelled through Tipu. It was a period of passive resistance that took the form of the abandonment of towns, followed in most cases by the relatively peaceful reduction of the runaways by Spaniards from Bacalar. This chapter describes this initial phase through the end of 1638. Chapter 8 picks up the resistance movement in 1642, after a hiatus in the reportage, by which time the desertion of towns had given way to the physical destruction of churches and houses and the resettlement of hundreds of families around Tipu. Anti-Spanish hostility was now open, and there was increased evidence of complicity from Tah Itza.

Tipu and its immediate hinterland had not fared well during the years preceding 1638. In 1614 and 1615 the area had been subjected to heavy reducciones by the alcalde of Salamanca de Bacalar.³ In 1618 and 1619 the Franciscans Fuensalida and Orbita had used the town of Tipu as the gateway to their unproductive encounters with the Itzas, and in the latter year the town suffered inquisition and punishment following the priests' discovery of idols hidden in homes. In 1620 the alcalde of Salamanca de Bacalar carried out a visita for the purpose of collecting fines, and he almost certainly included Tipu in his tour. The encomiendas of Tipu and other Belize towns were reconsolidated in 1622, certainly leading to more effective collection of rents.⁴ And in 1623 eighty Tipuans, including their cacique, were murdered while accompanying another Franciscan, Fray Diego Delgado, to Tah Itza.

Tipu was caught between two forces: Spanish rent collectors, missionaries, and military men bent on using the town in their designs on the Itzas on the one hand, and the aggressive, anti-Spanish Itzas on the other. It is hardly surprising, given the harsh treatment to which they were subjected by the Spaniards at Salamanca de Bacalar, that the Tipuans opted for an ideologically appealing anti-Spanish movement masterminded at Tah Itza. Leaders at Tipu spread the prophetic message of this movement throughout the Belize encomienda towns and for a time consolidated much of the territory's Maya population around Tipu itself.

If, as suggested in Chapter 6, the leadership of Tah Itza had some influence, however indirect, in the planning and execution of the Sacalum massacre of 1624, Itza influence was even more apparent in the resistance movements of 1638. It might be an overstatement to claim that Katun 1 Ahau was the "katun of the Itzas," but as that katun unfolded, evidence of moral or ideological, as well as political, influence by the Itza leadership over Tipu became increasingly apparent.

Complicating our understanding of the period are the poorly understood effects of increasing depredations of foreign pirates along the eastern coasts, which certainly would have stimulated coastal Mayas to seek

refuge in interior locations around Tipu. These depredations, in combination with independence movements at Tipu, had devastating implications for the villa of Bacalar, which was already in a weakened state due to its administration by an absentee leadership based at Valladolid. Bacalar was abandoned by the Spanish during this katun, much as Villa Real had been abandoned under siege by Alonso Dávila over a century earlier. Katun 1 Ahau witnessed the collapse of an era of Spanish control over the ancient provinces of Uaymil, Chetumal, and Dzuluinicob. At the same time that the Mayas of Dzuluinicob appeared to have gained a degree of autonomy, however, the katun also ushered in a new colonial era that would ultimately turn Dzuluinicob over to British control.

PRELUDE TO RESISTANCE

Upon his arrival in Yucatan in 1621, Governor Diego de Cárdenas pursued a vigorous policy to bring the eastern and southeastern regions of the Maya frontier under control. Although the most dramatic example of this policy was his support of Mirones's entrada to Ixpimienta and Sacalum, he also underwrote new reduction efforts in the Bacalar province. A few months before Cárdenas's arrival, Governor Arresconde de Losada y Taboada had supported more such efforts along the eastern coast of the peninsula; Cárdenas solidified these reductions at the Bahía del Espíritu Santo by granting an illegal encomienda to the soldier who pursued them. The combined effect of all of these activities was to reinforce rather than mitigate the likelihood of Maya resistance in areas occupied by Maya fugitives running away from conditions of economic exploitation in the north. Flight to these areas increased markedly over the next years as the burdens of repartimiento in the north steadily increased, resulting both in the increase of population in the fugitive zones, particularly around Ixpimienta, and in sentiments of frontier Maya resistance.

New Reductions and the Reestablishment of Encomiendas in Bacalar

Reductions on the upper Belize-Macal rivers. By the time Fuensalida and Orbita arrived at Tipu in 1618, a new effort by the vecinos of Bacalar to recongregate the upper Belize-Macal river area was already well under way. This effort continued after the friars' departure, resulting in the redefinition and reassignment of these and other encomiendas in the Bacalar province.

According to one source, two towns along the upper Belize River

were subjected in 1615 to new reductions by Juan Sánchez de Aguilar, the Valladolid-based *alcalde ordinario* of Bacalar. Sánchez de Aguilar claimed that in that year he "reduced and congregated the Indians that are today settled in the towns of Petentzub and Zaczuz."⁵ Another source, however, claims that reductions at Petentzub, Zaczuz, and Tipu had been pursued in 1608 or 1609.⁶ This earlier reduction may well have been carried out, but a near doubling in the amount of tribute paid by the barrio of San Juan Extramuros in 1615 confirms that reductions resulting in the removal of population to the area of the villa did occur that year.⁷ In any event, we can conclude that the upstream Belize-Macal river towns were under nominal Spanish control by the time that Fuensalida and Orbita established their mission at Tipu in 1618, following the Itza mission to Mérida a year or two earlier. Furthermore, the fact of one or more reductions around this time implies that the Bacalar *encomenderos* had lost control over the region sometime earlier during Katun 5 Ahau, which began in 1598.

No sooner had Fuensalida and Orbita left Tipu than the *alcalde ordinario* of Bacalar, Juan Alonso Díaz de Aguilar, carried out a general visita of the Bacalar province in 1620.⁸ The highly confused accounts from Bacalar during this period suggest that a number of additional new tributaries were added during his visita, which must have included even more reductions throughout the province.⁹

Assignment of the Belize encomiendas to a native of Mérida. Just as Governor Cárdenas supported Mirones's foolhardy venture to pacify the Itzas by sending a military mission through Ixpimienta, he apparently hoped to firm up Spanish control over the recalcitrant towns of Belize. Recognizing that colonial stability in the Bacalar province was essential for the success of Mirones's venture, he sought in early 1622 to redistribute several *encomienda* vacancies in Bacalar. On 17 March of that year, on the same day that Mirones was gathering information at Hopelchen about the fugitives living at Ixpimienta, Cárdenas announced the vacancy of three such *encomiendas*.¹⁰

The first of these included the three towns of Pacha, Mazanahau, and Punquy, all of which were in the general vicinity of the villa.¹¹ They had been held by García Rodríguez, possibly a Bacalar descendant of Martín Rodríguez, El Piloto, who had been killed at Chanlacan in 1547. García Rodríguez had died without heirs.

The second included two towns identified as Tipu and Chinam, formerly held by Doña Inés de Contreras, who had died in 1618, also without heirs; nothing is known of this woman. This Tipu was apparently a

reduction town near Bacalar, perhaps near Chinam and probably composed of individuals relocated from Tipu on the Macal River; Chinam itself was possibly located at the present site of Punta Consejo.

The third vacancy included the three towns of Soite, Campin, and Mayapan. These had been held by Hernando Sánchez de Aguilar, who gave them up in favor of retaining the encomienda held by his wife, Doña Francisca Cuello. Soite and Campin were Manche Chol towns on the southern coast of Belize, but the location of Mayapan is not known.

A day later Cárdenas added a fourth encomienda to the list that included the Belize-Macal river towns of Petentzub, Zaczuz, and Tipu. He indicated that although these towns had been reduced fourteen years earlier, they had never been charged for tribute. In fact, a census of the town had not been made.¹²

The outcome of the "oppositions" to these vacancies was the formation of a single redefined encomienda consisting of two groups of towns. García Rodríguez received the entire encomienda by virtue of his marriage to Francisca Sosa, whose ancestors were conquerors of Yucatan. The first group of towns included Pacha, Mazanahau, Punquy, Chinam, and Tipu (the first Tipu mentioned above), valued at a rent of nine cargas of cacao annually. The other group comprised Petentzuc, Zaczuz, and "the other Tipu, whose reduction from the forests has been taking place." The rent of this Belize-Macal river group was thirty-five mantas. Inexplicably, Soite, Campin, and Mayapan were omitted from this combined encomienda.

Rodríguez was instructed in his title to carry out a recount or retasación of his towns and to provide them with religious indoctrination. If he did so, he would have had to administer such activities from the great distance of Mérida, where he was a resident. In assigning these towns to Rodríguez, Governor Cárdenas had rejected the opposition of José Gómez Galván, a native son of Bacalar who was married to a native daughter with impressive genealogical qualifications.¹³ Just as the vecinos of Bacalar found themselves less and less in control of their own native population as their Spanish patronage shifted to Valladolid and Mérida, the Maya inhabitants of the Bacalar encomiendas found themselves even more isolated from the sources of their exploitation.

The reassignment of Chanlacan and Yumpeten. Following the death of the Bacalareño Diego Riveros sometime after 1570, his encomienda of Chanlacan and Yumpeten remained unassigned until 1626, when it was finally entitled by Governor Cárdenas to Juan Sánchez de Aguilar.¹⁴ This was the same Juan Sánchez de Aguilar who had carried out reductions in Belize in 1615, while he was alcalde of Bacalar. The value of this enco-

mienda was only five mantas annually, indicating the presence of only twenty tributaries. He also held a second small, unidentified encomienda valued at eighty pesos.¹⁵

It is doubtful that Juan Sánchez de Aguilar had ever resided for much time in Bacalar, as he appears to have kept his household in Valladolid. He even sent his son, Francisco Sánchez de la Seña, to Bacalar to accept the formal possession of the encomienda in his father's name. The possession itself was certified by the Valladolid cabildo, which kept the records on file there. We see yet again that for all intents and purposes the encomenderos of Bacalar were all absentee vecinos of the villa.

The "Discovery" and Resettlement of the Bahía del Espíritu Santo

In 1608 Fray Gaspar de Sosa carried out a reduction of 106 Mayas, who were settled in a village that he named San Francisco de Hoyal. This reduction was somewhere in the vicinity of the Bahía de la Ascención and may well have been the first such reduction in this area.¹⁶ Hoyal was assigned as a crown pueblo and was apparently considered by the inhabitants of Bacalar to be in their own territorial jurisdiction.

Hoyal itself disappeared from the record, but in late 1620 one Hernando de Landeras found some of its inhabitants living on the Bahía del Espíritu Santo. They had run away from their town, they said, because of mistreatment and onerous assignments of personal service they had received from the alcaldes of Bacalar.¹⁷

Landeras, who had served at the port of Sisal since about 1605, had been commissioned by Governor Arresconde de Losada y Taboada in October 1620 to travel by sea to Ecab and Cozumel, where he was to carry out a visita on behalf of the governor. He was authorized to compel the inhabitants to repair their churches; to see to it that they were being agriculturally productive; and to fine any native officials who had misbehaved or mistreated their subjects. He was also to investigate mistreatment of the natives by their encomenderos, including the imposition of *derramas* and excess tribute. From Cozumel he was to survey the coast to the south and round up and resettle any apostates or "gentiles" he might find.

It was on his survey of the coast that Landeras "discovered" a bay south of the Bahía de la Ascención, to which he gave the name Bahía del Espíritu Santo. He claimed that he was approached at the bay by the Mayas who had run away from Hoyal, asking him to have their children baptized. They expressed willingness to be relocated on a point on the bay that he named Punta de Cruces and told him of other Maya settlements in the interior.

Landeras and his small party managed to round up a number of individuals from ten settlements, all of whom he settled in a town that he named Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción, known by the Mayas as Canchacay.¹⁸ He completed a matrícula of the new town that included sixty-four adult men and women and an unspecified number of children. Having recognized Alonso May as their leader, Landeras left May in charge of completing a "large house" that would serve as a church, while he returned to Mérida. As Landeras had no priest with him, he could neither pursue the baptisms nor dedicate the church.

Landeras and others reported all of this in person to the governor at the beginning of February 1621. Governor Losada y Taboada instructed Landeras to return to the reduction town with the secular priest of Ichmul, Juan de la Huerta. They were to see to it that the reduction continue, that the church be dedicated, and that native officials be named. A principal function of the new town was that it serve as a lookout for enemy ships, which used the coast as a hiding place.¹⁹

Although there is no record of Landeras's follow-up visit to Canchacay, on 21 November, 1621, the new governor, Diego de Cárdenas, issued Landeras title to the encomienda of his reduction town. This he did despite assurances in a letter issued by Governor Losada y Taboada to Alonso May, written on 2 February 1621, that the town would enjoy a ten-year tribute holiday and would after that point be assigned as a crown pueblo. Such reductions by reconquest were expressly required by cédula to be subject to the ten-year tribute holiday and crown status clause, but Cárdenas paid no attention to such formal efforts to protect the interests of the frontier Mayas. He issued Landeras's title a week before he received Mirones's petition to open a road through Itza territory and ten days before authorizing Mirones's entrada.

The Canchacay reduction, however small it might have been, was yet another step in the colonial government's policy to isolate the alcaldes and secular priests of Bacalar from their control over territory that they sought to manage and exploit. Governor Losada y Taboada had taken Landeras's advice that the new reduction not be administered from Bacalar, sending the Ichmul priest there in place of the priest from Bacalar. In granting the encomienda to Landeras, who, like Mirones, had served on the north coast, Cárdenas continued to weaken Bacalar's control over its own hinterland. This policy, also applied in the entitlement of the Belize encomiendas to García Rodríguez of Mérida, was clearly a conscious design to bring the frontier directly under the control of the colonial governorship.

Renewed Flight to La Pimienta

Following the departure of Governor Diego de Cárdenas in 1628, the new governor, Juan de Vargas, pursued a self-enrichment policy of repartimiento exploitation that rivaled that of his predecessor. In 1630 the royal officials of Yucatan brought charges against Vargas for fostering the misuse of appointed jueces de grana and other jueces de repartimiento, who in most cases were said to be his own employees.²⁰ The effect of such policies, it was claimed, was a massive increase in flight of encomienda Mayas to the fugitive zones. As many as 20,000—a number, however excessive, that was cited again and again—were by then said to be centered around La Pimienta. In language similar to that used at the time of the Mirones entrada, La Pimienta was described as being “close by the population of the Tah Itzaes, unconverted Indians and bellicose warriors.”

In a letter to the provincial treasurer, the provincial Fray Pedro de Mata wrote while on a general visita on 12 November 1629 that a month and a half earlier the “Quehach Indians” had killed more than forty-four married Christian Indians at Sacalum. This is the first word we have indicating that Sacalum was still in existence following the 1624 massacre. By the “Quehach Indians” he seems to have meant the leaders of the fugitive population around La Pimienta, whose numbers he also reported at 20,000. These, he said, had run away “because of the jueces,” and they “fear no one, not even ten thousand Spaniards who go to search them out.” In an earlier letter to the royal official Juan Ortíz Equiluz, dated 1 November, he had stressed that the flight was so serious that some towns were left without caciques or alcaldes.²¹ Even Don Juan Ek, the cacique of Mani, had fled; he considered Ek to be the most “brioso” (courageous) of all those who had run away.

The scope of such flight, however exaggerated it might have been, dwarfed whatever small gains the Spanish had made in resettling the towns of Belize or the Bahía del Espíritu Santo. We learn from López de Cogolludo that famine may have been as important as the excesses of the jueces, as he reported that between 1627 and 1630 the peninsula was struck by four consecutive shortfall harvests due to a massive infestation of locusts. The resulting famine was itself the cause of flight that must have made policies of repartimiento extraction all the more unbearable:

The Indians were forced by necessity to abandon their towns, going to others that had not suffered such a shortage, and most to the forests in search of roots and wild fruits. Many died in them—most unfortunate

of all, without sacraments. Many were left dead along the roads due to starvation. Everything was in a state of confusion because the living did not know for certain where they [the dead] were.²²

The locust plague was ended through the intercession of San Juan Bautista during a procession in Mérida in 1631. Prayers to the image of this saint resulted in the miraculous flight of swarms of the insects to the sea, where they drowned. No sooner was the resultant plentiful harvest of 1631 gathered than the new governor, Fernando Centeno Maldonado, ordered the reduction of those who had run away.²³ As much surplus maize as possible was assembled to feed those who were to be returned to their original towns.

In an unusual move, the governor then set out to lead the roundup himself as part of the general visita of the province. He was accompanied by one secular priest and a friar and an unspecified number of other persons whose actual duty it would be to round up the runaways and identify their proper hometowns. Wherever they went, the governor carried a gallows with him and issued a public announcement that it would be used to punish anyone who attempted to hide any of the *forasteros* (nonresidents), male or female, large or small. The rationale for this threat was to force any caciques or principales who might hide their laborers in the forest to give them up. The houses of those who were found in the forest were burned, and the caciques of the town were forced to receive them as they were distributed and provide them with food.

So successful was this reduction, according to López de Cogolludo, that 16,000 adults were collected in the Costa alone. Yet it is highly doubtful that any effort was made at this time to bring back to the fold any of the runaways in the Pimienta region. It was trouble enough to keep those Mayas in the northern provinces in their proper places; to risk the dangers of reentering La Pimienta would not be contemplated for some time to come.

Renewed Flight in Belize

In addition to the dramatic events of 1618–1619 and 1623–1624 at Tah Itza, Tipu, and Sacalum, we have glimpsed a series of related circumstances that had begun to unfold about 1615 and that must have caused significant dislocations in the lives of those who lived in the Maya towns of the Bacalar province. These included an impressive increase in the degree of flight from the towns of northern Yucatan, a four-year famine in the north, an unabated magnetic attraction by the Pimienta region as a center for fugitives, and an intensive series of reduction measures

throughout Yucatan as well as in the Bacalar province. To these conditions we must add further information that had to be digested and interpreted by the Mayas of Bacalar—that is, the new evidence that the governors and their employees and friends in Mérida and Valladolid meant to clamp stiffer external authority on the Bacalar encomiendas, and the presumed claims by Itza and other prophets of the Maya frontier that Katun 3 Ahau, which began in 1618, was to be a time of resistance to colonial controls.

The order of chaos. López de Cogolludo was correctly reflecting the Spanish view in recognizing that the late 1620s and early 1630s were a time of great confusion in Yucatan. On the other hand, "confusion" may have been in the eyes of the beholder, for Maya resistance and flight both appear to be events characterized by a sense of order. What was confusing to Spaniards was clear enough to Mayas, whose ability to control information and to act in unity upon such information was far more effective than that of their colonial lords.

To a Spaniard, confusion or chaos was caused by the mere absence of Maya labor. Ironically, however, the tighter the controls they imposed on labor and flight, the more likely it was that further flight and resistance would ensue. Mayas sought consciously to engender among Spaniards the confusion bred by flight. Such flight, of course, was not only a conscious, ordered act but also one that could be administered by fugitive and frontier leaders who were anxious to weaken the Spanish grip. The forests were full of recruiters who sought to organize pockets of resistance. The more they recruited in the towns of the north, the more the Spanish grasp of their subjects was confounded.

We can discover a hint of the "order" that must have existed behind the "chaos" of flight in a series of small encounters in Belize during 1630. These encounters, characterized by the usual cyclical pattern of flight and subsequent reduction, are unusual in that they are well documented, providing subtle insights into the nature of Maya-Spanish communication in a time of unrest. They tell us something about what the Mayas were *not* saying to their Spanish overseers. In their particular style of silence, we can begin to grasp the strategy that would be applied later in the massive resistance that would begin eight years later.

Flight from Xibun and Soite. In March 1631, the regidor and alférez Cristóbal Sánchez petitioned the alcalde ordinario of Bacalar, Captain Bartolomé Palomino, to hear witnesses that he was about to bring before him at the coastal town of Zacatan.²⁴ These witnesses were called to testify about Sánchez's claims concerning what had happened the previous year while he himself was alcalde.

Sánchez's claim was that in March 1630 the Indians of Xibun and Soite had rebelled and fled to the forest, leaving their villages without a soul in them. They had taken all they had with them, including the church bells, intending not to return. This, he claimed, they did for no other reason than to practice idolatry, as the Spaniards had found idols among them when they apprehended them in their forest villages five months after they had run away. He said that he had gone at his own cost with six Spaniards and a number of Indians taken from other pueblos. Plying the deserters with "kind words" of reason, he convinced them, he claimed, to return to their pueblos.

Several of the witnesses were Mayas who had accompanied Sánchez on his reduction of the runaways. These spoke through the interpreter Joseph Moreno, whose translations were recorded by the scribe Francisco de Rivera:

Andrés Canul, the forty-eight-year old alcalde of Zacatan reported that in 1630 Sánchez came with some Spaniards in a falca and ordered Canul and four other men from Zacatan to go with them to Xibun. Canul was to be the pilot. At Xibun they found the town deserted, because the inhabitants had risen up in rebellion and fled to the forest, taking the church bells with them (for they could not find them in the belfry). Sánchez searched the surroundings and was unable to find a single inhabitant of the town.

Canul and the others from Zacatan thereupon led a search for the runaways, a dangerous and difficult undertaking. After four days of walking they arrived at a forest outpost called Chululte, where they found them with their women and children. Canul said that Sánchez reasoned with them and presented them with gifts, eventually reducing them back at Xibun, where they were left in a quiet and peaceful state, happy to be rescued from their idolatry.

However, the alcalde and regidores of Xibun did not come out at first; a month later Sánchez went to get them. At Chululte Canul removed a quantity of idols that the runaways had in four "ranchos" where they went to worship them.

After this they went to Soite, where the disturbances had also caused everyone to flee to the forest. In the same gentle manner these were also convinced to return to their pueblos. The Spaniards gave them gifts and chocolate to eat.

Francisco Zima, one of those from Zacatan who accompanied this party, was about thirty years old. His account was similar to that of

Canul, although he made it clear that he and the other Mayas were taken as paddlers and that when he and his companions threw the idols they found at Chululte in the river: "Zima asked the runaways himself why they had fled, and they replied that it was 'only for their pleasure' (*'no mas por su gusto'*) that they did so."²⁵ Francisco Puc, another of the paddlers from Zacatan, was the youngest of the witnesses, about twenty-five years old. To the information presented by the others, he added only that Chululte was a regular congregated pueblo, with *alcaldes* and *regidores*.

Five days later, on 18 March, additional witnesses were heard in Soite:

Don Gaspar Chan was the forty-year-old *cacique* of Soite. He had been in Bacalar when the news that the Soite inhabitants had abandoned their town arrived. Sánchez ordered him as *cacique* of Soite to go with him to recover the runaways. Arriving at Soite they found the place deserted, but they found the town's *alcalde*, Francisco Ek, in his *milpa*. Sánchez asked Ek to help them find the others, but Ek did not want to go and paid no attention to what Sánchez told him. Chan went alone to look for the runaways and was joined by Sánchez, who reasoned with them and presented gifts, reducing them peacefully to their pueblo. Eventually Sánchez convinced Ek, the *alcalde*, to return as well and left him in charge of the governance of Soite.

Francisco Yascal, about thirty-five, was now the *alcade* of Soite. He had little to say, although he was one of those who had run away. At the time Francisco Ek was found, he said, Ek had been hiding in his cacao orchard.

The Spanish witnesses at Soite were considerably more voluble:

Diego de Avila, fifty, of Bacalar was in the villa when the news of the flight arrived and went with Sánchez, Sebastian Gómez, and Andrés Franco, armed with arms, *harquebuses*, powder, and rope. At Zacatan they took Indians and supplies to add to those brought from Bacalar.

At Xibun, which was deserted, they found that the church ornaments and bells had been carried off. They searched the *milpas* and cacao orchards, finding no one. For four nights they kept armed watch; on the fifth day Sánchez ordered them to begin to search the forest, opening paths with their knives they had brought with them. This was difficult work, and they were afraid of being shot at with arrows.

They walked more than five leagues in the forest and eventually reached a hamlet called Chululte. They approached the settlement quietly at night and took them by surprise while they were deeply involved with their idols. They held guard over them all night; at dawn Sánchez began to talk and reason with them, giving them food to eat and chocolate to drink. Gradually the reduction proceeded until eight days or more later they took them all back, contented now, to their pueblo, using only peaceful techniques.

He had asked the runaways in Maya why they had left, but they said it was only because it was their pleasure to do so. They collected a great many idols from the forest, all of which they threw in the river.

Proceeding to Soite, they found the town deserted, the houses empty, and the bells gone. They did find a servant named Pedro de Argüelles and a mulatto, Pedro Juan. These told Sánchez that the cacique of Soite, whom Sánchez had sent ahead from Bacalar, was out in the forest looking for the runaways. So they all went with Sánchez through dense forest and found the cacique, who couldn't carry out the reduction alone. The runaways were reduced peacefully, and their idols, which they had in their ranchos, were taken away from them.

The Spaniards asked where Francisco Ek, their alcalde was, and they all said that he was out in his cacao orchard. The cacique then told Sánchez that he had found him earlier but that he had not wanted to come. The Spaniards found him and convinced him with love and kindness to come back.

The last four witnesses, who, were Spaniards, added little to Avila's detailed account. No other Maya witnesses testified.

Despite the "set-up" quality of the unrecorded questions that generated these reconstructed testimonies, we can learn much from these witnesses. The Maya witnesses can be described as "mum" in comparison with the voluble Avila. They answered "when spoken to" and provided only the barest of factual details, leaving out any suggestions of their bravery or the motivations of others. Avila and the other Spaniards, however, were anxious to provide details about the dangers of the enterprise and about the extent of their own risk-taking.

Behind these witnesses were the unidentified captives who had answered the question, "Why did you run away?" The universal reply, reported by Mayas and Spaniards alike, was to the effect, "Oh, just because we wanted to."²⁶ The underlying meaning of this "answer" was more likely "that is none of your business" or "damned if we're going to tell you." Whatever the real cause of their decision to run away as entire

towns, abandon their cacao orchards, carry their bells with them, practice non-Christian religious rituals using "idols," and—in the case of Xibun—reconstitute their town at an inland location five-days' walk away, it must have been a compelling one.

The official testimony of these two cases of flight, then, suggested that running away had no meaning. Surely the Maya witnesses knew better than that, but they were no more likely to give away the meaning than were those whom they were forced to round up. If the Spaniards knew, they were not saying. And while the Mayas were obfuscating at every level, the Spaniards were also telling less than the whole truth. As gentle as the latter may or may not have been in pursuing the reductions, we can be quite certain that the runaways did not return because of the gifts they had been presented or because of the *alcalde's* sweet words. Spanish "reason" did not convince Maya runaways to return home except to the degree that logic was reinforced by weapons and threats. Spanish testimonies and petitions reflected what they knew the officials needed to hear—that is, that the Mayas behave like children, not understanding what they do and listening with docile innocence to parental chastisement. No Spanish witness or reader of testimony really believed such nonsense, of course, but such was the required formula.

If one of the reasons that the Mayas were running away had to do with absolute frustration with Spanish mistreatment, the phrase that it was "only for their pleasure" could have been carefully chosen by the Spaniards themselves to cover up their own role in the matter. Although this may be a partial explanation, I think it is unlikely that this was the entire story. Running away was more likely a response to a "call" to run away from a more distant source of Maya advice, a call legitimized by religious or prophetic claims that were being tested and reinforced in rituals carried out in secret by the self-exiled members of the communities. Such was clearly the case in the universal flight that characterized the resistance movement of 1638 and must certainly have been a factor in 1631 as well. It is striking, however, that the Bacalar Spaniards made no effort in 1631 to claim an underground plot, in contrast to their strong accusations of such complicity in 1638.

Despite the cynicism that permeates Spanish reporting, then, there is nonetheless a strong indication in this and similar testimonies that something critical was being hidden from Spanish knowledge. The Mayas knew more than the Spaniards, and both parties were aware of the unequal status of communication. The Maya intention was to leave the Spaniards thoroughly confused.

RESISTANCE IN BACALAR, 1638

The Indians of this area had been quiet up until the period that I am going to describe, in which, because of our sins or some other reason that only God knows, He permitted the uprising of the Indians of Bacalar and all the areas under its jurisdiction. Even today, in 1656, they have not returned to the obedience that they owe the church and the king. By 1636 they began to cause problems, with some of them leaving their towns, along with some from this province, going to the forests of Tipu, which . . . are the closest to the gentile Itzas. This continued until in 1639, when they completely refused to obey God and the king, horribly rejecting our holy faith.²⁷

So wrote López de Cogolludo in his introduction to a description of Franciscan attempts in 1642 to bring back the Mayas of the Belize missions to the obedience they had rejected. Until the recent discovery of records describing this uprising, nothing more was known of this dramatic climax of the twenty-year period that had preceded it. Nor had it been recognized that 1638, the opening year of Katun 1 Ahau, was possibly the prophetic moment for a Maya "declaration of independence" from colonial control in Bacalar—the final result of the violent expressions of anticolonialism that characterized Katun 3 Ahau.

From this new documentation we may begin to understand the Maya rationale for such resistance, which turns out to have been perfectly intelligible in light of foregoing events. Unfortunately, many of the events surrounding the resistance movement are clouded by poor reportage from Bacalar, and many crucial questions must remain unanswered. Through them, however, we may discern new rays of light on this dramatic effort to resist colonial control.

The abandonment of Xibun and Soite in 1631 was probably the beginning of a series of such flights from the mission towns of Belize, for in 1637 it was reported that Lamanai, on New River Lagoon, had been reduced and was paying tribute. That year Lamanai paid fifty-three pesos, five tomines and had the status of a vacant encomienda made up of "runaway Indians." The following year a total of seventeen pesos, seven tomines was collected from the barrio of San Juan Extramuros at Bacalar, including the tributes paid by the "port of Lamanai," which was composed of "Indians aggregated at the said barrio."²⁸ From this we may conclude that some of the reduced Mayas at Lamanai—less, however, than the total number—were removed from Lamanai itself to San Juan.

Flight from Tipu

Some light on this increase in flight was shed in a letter written by the governor of Yucatan to the king on 10 July 1638.²⁹ In this letter the Marqués de Santo Floro described the beginnings of the collapse of colonial control in the Bacalar province and his interpretation of its causes. The governor wrote that ever since he had been in office he had received petitions from the *defensor de naturales* on behalf of the Indians of the villa of Bacalar complaining about its Spaniards, mulattos, and mestizos. These, he said, numbered only about fifty and were a miserable, poor lot, living by going from village to village selling things which they bartered for the locally produced cacao. In so doing, he claimed, they extorted the Indians.

Despite his efforts to correct this situation, the Bacalar cabildo had ignored the governor's orders. He had wanted to carry out a full investigation and punish the offenders, including the *alcalde*. When he sent two investigators to Bacalar, however, the local inhabitants apprehended them and prepared to hang them on gallows set up in the plaza of the town. The investigators managed to escape, but he had not dared to send more.

He described the Maya villages as small and poor, although their inhabitants were peaceable people. The largest of the towns was Tipu, located eighty leagues from Bacalar over difficult terrain. The one secular priest was unsatisfactory, too old to walk the roads.³⁰ The governor therefore sent a priest to assist him, but at Tipu he behaved so badly and "tyrannically" that in 1637 the town's governor and *principales* sent representatives all the way to Mérida to request that the *defensor* complain to the governor himself about the mistreatment they received from the Bacalar *vecinos*. The governor referred their complaint about the priest to the ecclesiastical council, gave new orders to the secular priests, and sent a strong letter to the Bacalar cabildo.

Some days after he had written, the Bacalareños advised the governor that the inhabitants of Tipu had rebelled, disclaiming their obedience to the crown. In Mérida he found an Indian from the Tipu region and sent him to Tipu with a letter to their *cacique*, *alcaldes*, and *principales*, saying that he did not believe what he had been told, as otherwise he would have sent Spaniards to punish them. The messenger returned all the way to Mérida with two Tipuans sent by the *cacique* and his companions. These brought with them the results of their elections for confirmation, as was required annually of all Maya towns. They made their report to the governor "with great submission," saying that it

was true that most of the Indians of Tipu had fled to the forest on account of fear of the people of Bacalar, who were said to be on their way there at the time. They reported that they, along with the cacique, his lieutenant, and one alcalde, had stayed in the village, however. On the strength of the governor's friendly letter they said they would try to return the rest back to the village.

The governor sent the messengers back to Tipu with another friendly letter to the town's leaders, encouraging them in their "reduction." He sent with them gifts of money, hats, and ribbons for the governor and his lieutenant. Nonetheless, he wrote, the people of Bacalar continued their excessive behavior in the other towns of the province, and the cabildo of Bacalar reported to him that by Lent of 1638 a quarter of the Indians in the area surrounding Tipu had abandoned their homes. In Bacalar itself the Spaniards had arrested eight or nine Mayas who they claimed were guilty in the "flight or uprising." The governor had this group taken to the Mérida prison and, at the time he wrote, was having his lieutenant extract their confessions. Despite the governor's distaste with the behavior of the Bacalareños, he expressed implicit sympathy with the situation in which they found themselves, fearful of a general Indian attack on the villa and with only fifty men able to resist. Of the 300 or so tributaries in the province, something less than 200 were allied with those of Tipu. The governor had supplied Bacalar with powder and ammunition, but he refused to grant their desire for troops to protect them.

In addition, he had met with the Franciscan officials with the idea of sending three or four friars to the Bacalar province, men who were fluent in Maya and familiar with attempts to carry out reductions in similar circumstances. The Franciscan authorities were agreeable to this plan but insisted that Bacalar's secular priest be required to leave for Mérida because of an earlier bad experience.³¹ Preparations for a Franciscan reduction were being made, but it was not clear whether or not the secular priest would stay. If such an effort came to nought, the governor believed the failure of the mission would encourage the multitude of Indians throughout the peninsula to increase their resistance. "And their ability to be bad," he wrote, "is so great as to be extreme, although their scant courage is such that they are called 'sons of fear.'" In fact, the Franciscan mission to Bacalar did not set out until 1642. As will be seen in the following chapter, it met with the same failure and had the overall negative effect that the governor of Yucatan had feared.

Flight and Reductions in Bacalar

Although there was a flurry of correspondence between the governor and the cabildo of Bacalar during this period, only three letters from Bacalar, all postdating the governor's report, appear to have survived. These letters provide our only additional detailed insight into what had gone on during this eventful year. Given their source, they must be interpreted with caution. Much of the information they contain appears to be genuine, however.

On 20 September 1638 the alcalde of Bacalar, Captain Luis Sánchez de Aguilar, and other members of the cabildo reported that about a week earlier the procurador and six other vecinos of Bacalar had gone to the abandoned coastal towns of Chinam and Zacatan (along the coast of Belize) to "look for provisions."³² Back in Bacalar, meanwhile, two other Bacalareños had arrived, having come up the same coast. These reported having seen eight lashed pairs of canoes (or falcas) with many Indians in them heading for the abandoned Zacatan, where the procurador and his companions had gone. Luis Sánchez de Aguilar and the alférez mayor, Francisco Sánchez, fearing that their compatriots would be attacked at night as had happened on an earlier occasion, decided to go with ten vecinos to rescue the party at Zacatan and to search along the coast for the canoe-loads of Indians.

They reached the party successfully at Zacatan and returned by the coast looking for the Indians. At Chinam they searched the milpas and captured seven Indians, four from Chinam and three from Manan. Those from Manan said that fellow villagers were hiding four leagues inland from Chinam, beyond some lakes, with all their wives and children. The captain went with his men to search for them. Once in sight of the Manan runaways he sent them a message with one of the captives, assuring them that they would not be harmed or punished. The Spaniards managed to capture the entire party, taking them back to Bacalar, where, counter to the assurances they had been granted, the runaways were harshly whipped.

The captives numbered more than eighty children and adults, who

have declared that by deceits and threats from the Indians of Tipu, by messages that they had sent them that they were to give obedience to their king and wished them to abandon their town, saying that if they did not do so all would die and be finished, because at such a time the Itzas would come to kill them and there would be great mortalities and hurricanes that would flood the land.

Luis Sánchez de Aguilar claimed that similar reports had been given to them by various messengers and by the *alcalde* of San Juan Extramuros, who was by then imprisoned in Mérida. For reasons that are unclear, the Bacalareños went to the town of Holpatin in order to check out the accuracy of the prophetic rumors. At Holpatin, which had reportedly been suffering for three months from famine, the Spaniards confirmed that the reports had been the product of "deceit and falsehoods from those of Tipu."

Back at Bacalar the captives, Sánchez de Aguilar claimed, repented leaving their villages and agreed that all the reports of prophecy were false, "because the intent of those of Tipu was to take all of them up to their town where they would be their servants." By then, wrote Sánchez de Aguilar, the Mayas realized that the Spanish did not intend to reduce them. Besides, they did not like having to scrounge for their existence while away from their villages. Nonetheless, he implored God's help in rounding up the rest of those who had fled and in restoring the Manan Indians then in Bacalar to Christian doctrine; these were to be resettled at the nearby coastal location of Tamalcab.

On 29 October the *alcalde* wrote that he had just returned from a trip down the coast with the *alférez mayor*, Francisco Sánchez de la Seña.³³ There they had rounded up runaways from Soite, who had abandoned their town just as they had done in 1631. These he returned to Soite before going on, in a further replay of the events of 1631, to Xibun, whose inhabitants were also hiding in the bush. Like those of Chinam and Manan, these runaways stated that they had hidden out of their fear of threats they had received from the Mayas of Tipu, "who made them believe many things that caused them to abandon the town." The same threats had been made to the Indians of Yumpeten, who were also resettled in their village. On all of these reductions the *alcalde* read the runaways an encouraging letter from the governor.

Sánchez de Aguilar reported that he had written a friendly letter to various Mayas gathered at Holpatin (on the New or Dzuluinicob River), promising them pardon in the name of the king and the governor. This he had apparently done in preparation for the visit to Holpatin that he reported in his letter of 20 September. He had ordered those at Holpatin to return to their villages and had written to three Maya men whose wives were now held hostage in Bacalar that he would return the women if their husbands would return to their pueblos. Three days after he had sent the message a man from Holpatin arrived at Bacalar, saying that one of the messengers had been bitten by a snake and that his friends would

respond after he recovered. Despite reference to news from Holpatin in his September letter, this town apparently remained unreduced.

To the captured inhabitants from Manan, who were by then "happily" settled at the previously abandoned site of Tamalcab, Sánchez de Aguilar forwarded a letter of pardon from the governor. In accordance with the governor's wishes he assured them that they would not have to pay any back tributes until they were able to do so. A winter planting had already been made at Tamalcab.

The alcalde reported that he had rewarded four of the principales of San Juan Extramuros with tribute exemptions for their help in the reductions. By the date of writing, five towns were reported as being in the process of resettlement: Pacha, Yumpeten, Soite, Manan, and Xibun. Pacha's participation in the resistance is something of a surprise, indicating that the movement had spread further to the north than had previously been reported. Lamanai, which appeared in the cabildo's accounts as having been partially reduced to San Juan Extramuros, was absent from the alcalde's list. The rest, including Holpatin and, of course, Tipu and the other Belize-Macal river towns, were still in a state of rebellion. Of those that were being reduced, he asked that this year he be allowed to confirm the elections, as it would be impossible to take them to Mérida.

Finally, on 5 November, Luis Sánchez de Aguilar wrote a short letter noting that he had planned to travel to Pacha to collect testimonies there. He had not done so, however, because he could not find a single sheet of paper in town on which to record the declarations.³⁴ It would be just as well to postpone this investigation, he reasoned, because "right now the Indians are very bellicose." Efforts to punish them had backfired, causing further resentment.

In this communication we learn the names of three of the "guiltiest Indians," who were among those imprisoned by the governor in Mérida. These were Gaspar Puc, the alcalde of San Juan Extramuros; Don Luis Kinil, the cacique of Pacha; and one Andrés Uxul. Their presence would hinder the reduction effort, the Bacalar alcalde argued, and he wished that they not be returned.

From Resistance to Rebellion

In 1639 Cárdenas Valencia wrote that "news has come from Bacalar that those few towns which we have described had been going to the forests, encouraged and deceived by those barbarous infidels of the Tah Itzaes, becoming one with them, as a result of which Bacalar will become

more deserted and short of people.³⁵ His predictions were completely on the mark. By 1642, after a blackout of reports on the situation, the governor wrote that eight of the rebel towns, consisting of some 300 families, had been congregated at Tipu itself. Only six villages of some 150 families—presumably including those five listed above—remained loyal to the crown; but of these some had fled to the forests “either out of fear that they would be carried off by the rebels or for not being able to tolerate the weight of work, being so few.”³⁶ Some of these had been repopulated at their original towns, including Lamanai, but specific information is lacking.³⁷

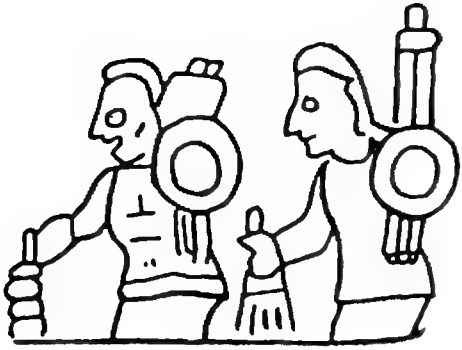
Writing later of these events López de Cogolludo, quoted earlier, claimed that the rebels had “completely refused to obey God and the king, horribly rejecting our holy faith. They returned to the vomit of their idolatries. They desecrated the images and burned the temples consecrated to the Divine Majesty and then their towns, and then they fled to the forests.”³⁸ A poignant indication of the truth of this claim is the recent archaeological discovery of an intrusive non-Christian offering within the walls of the nave of the church at Tipu. This offering is stylistically similar to one of the offerings discovered in a Maya ceremonial complex only a stone’s throw from the church.³⁹

None of the letters from Luís Sánchez de Aguilar mention the burning and destruction of the towns from which the inhabitants had fled. From this omission we may gather that at some point following the abandonment and reduction of the several towns between September and November of 1638, the anti-Spanish movement in other areas reached more dramatic proportions. In the following chapter we discover that the entire region from Holpatin on the New River all the way to Tipu on the Belize and Macal rivers—the ancient province of Dzuluinicob—was in a high state of rebellion in 1642.

The towns that the Bacalareños had been able to “save” were either along the coast or near the villa itself, but the situation in the southern interior worsened considerably. Tipu had shifted during this period from the position of passive resistance reported by the governor in July 1638 to that of active perpetrator of prophetic rumor by September of that year. By 1642, when Franciscan missionaries finally arrived to attempt pacification, Tipu’s status as a political center already prevented the Spaniards at Bacalar from recruiting and holding a sizable Maya following. By that year a policy of passive resistance, expressed by the *abandonment* of towns, had given way to a policy of settlement *destruction* and the reduction of the fugitives around Tipu itself. The records are

inadequate to indicate just when this shift took place, but it already must have been under way when the Spaniards found it impossible in 1638 to reduce the town of Holpatin. In the following chapter we turn to this second phase of the rebellion and the unsuccessful efforts by both friars and alcaldes to regain control over lost souls and territory.

8: KATUN 1 AHAU: REBELLION



Let the governor come. Let the king come. Let the Spanish come. We are ready to fight them. Now go and tell them.¹

The inauspicious beginnings of Katun 1 Ahau in 1638 left the Spanish colonial leadership at every level—from the local cabildo members at Bacalar and Valladolid to the governorship in Mérida—virtually powerless to stem the flight of the Maya population from the towns of the Bacalar province. By the end of 1638 a few Maya towns were still under colonial control, and some of these had been relocated closer to the villa by means of the standard practices of forced reduction. The local Spanish leadership no longer had the level of provincial support that had made it possible for a Juan Garzón to mount a major military venture against runaways in 1568, however.

The provincial governor, the Marqués de Santo Floro, apparently had neither the resources nor the inclination to lend support to the very Spaniards whom he regarded as a principal cause of Maya resistance. He was also well aware of the disaster that had befallen Mirones fourteen years earlier and was less willing than Governor Diego de Cárdenas had been to risk the council's approbation by seeking a military solution to what the crown regarded as a problem to be solved by religious persuasion. It was, then, to the Franciscans that the governor turned to try to convince the fugitives to return peaceably to their towns and villages.

Fortunately, again through López de Cogolludo's interpretation of the lost writings of Fray Bartolomé de Fuensalida, we have a detailed account of these Franciscan efforts.² The mission very nearly resulted in the martyrdom of two Franciscans, including Fuensalida himself. Much of Fuensalida's account is quoted directly by López de Cogolludo, so we may accept it, by and large, as a rare example of this genre of reportage.

From Fuensalida's pen we discover that what had appeared to the Spaniards as a passive resistance movement, resulting only in flight, was

by 1641 a full-scale effort by the leadership of Tipu to establish territorial and political hegemony over much of central and western Belize. Tipu, with apparent military and moral support from Tah Itza, became a semi-independent Maya ritual, military, and political center that would retain its autonomy over the next three katuns. Not until 1695, on the eve of Katun 8 Ahau and the impending collapse of the Itza polity, would Tipu again be actively recruited into participation in the Spanish colonial system.

This chapter concentrates on Fuensalida's remarkable account of the state of affairs in 1641.³ It also describes efforts of a secular sort carried out by one Captain Francisco Pérez of Bacalar during the early 1650s to accomplish what Fuensalida and his colleagues had been unable to complete a decade earlier—that is, the agreement of the interior Maya rebels to give up their autonomy in favor of renewed Spanish control. Throughout this period the effects of piracy along the coast were increasingly devastating, and by the end of Katun 1 Ahau Bacalar had become a powerless villa in exile at Pacha to the north, leaving the province in the hands of rebel Mayas and the buccaneers.

FUENSALIDA'S RETURN TO DZULUINICOB

In 1639 the Franciscan historian Cárdenas Valencia wrote that "news has come from Bacalar that those few towns which we have described had been going to the forests, encouraged and deceived by those barbarous infidels of the Tah Itzaes, becoming one with them, as a result of which Bacalar will become more deserted and short of people."⁴ López de Cogolludo wrote that in the same year, 1639, the Maya strategy of passive resistance through flight turned to active rebellion. Upon news of such behavior the governor, the Marqués de Santo Floro, met with the ecclesiastical cabildo in Mérida, and it was decided that a secular priest, Ambrosio de Figueroa, should be sent to Bacalar to try to convince the rebels to return to their towns.

Figueroa went to Bacalar and sent word ahead to the rebel towns that he was planning to visit them. His messengers carried the secular priest's bonnet and breviary as proof of his intentions, "but the rebels made fun of them and threatened to kill them if they came back." He took the warning to heart and returned to his post at Tixchel.⁵

The rebels had at some point indicated that they would meet with Franciscan representatives, but only on the condition that the despised old secular priest at Bacalar, Gregorio Marín de Aguilar, be replaced by

members of the Franciscan order. The governor was able to convince the new bishop, Dr. Juan Alonso Ocon, of such an arrangement, and plans were initiated to recruit Franciscan missionaries to return to this troublesome hotspot. Fray Bartolomé de Fuensalida, then serving at Cansahcab, was appointed as comisario, in recognition of his prior experience at Tipu and Tah Itza and of his command of the Maya language.

Fuensalida took with him three other Franciscans. One of these was Fray Juan de Estrada, a creole lay-friar who had spent many years in Bacalar, where he had served as alcalde before joining the order. He was said to be well liked by the Mayas and to have had many godchildren in Tipu.⁶ The other two were Fray Bartolomé de Becerril and Fray Martín Tejero, both of whom were of Spanish birth but fluent speakers of Maya.

The Franciscans received the governor's commitment of a maximum of 500 pesos in support of a six-month "reducción." The bishop sent them to Bacalar with orders addressed to Father Gregorio that he abandon his post and go to Valladolid, where he would receive the post of church sexton ("which is a good income").⁷ Carrying with them church ornaments from some of the convents, the friars left Mérida on 24 April 1641. They traveled via the Sierra convents, where the resident friars donated corn, vegetables, and salt, "all of which had been lacking in Bacalar due to the Indian uprising." Once they arrived at Bacalar the secular priest gave up his post with more apparent willingness than Fuensalida and Orbita had experienced under similar circumstances in 1618.

The vecinos of Bacalar drew lots to determine who would be the patron saint to accompany the entrada to Tipu, and Santa Lucía was chosen. A series of masses was performed, including a *novenario* (a nine-day ceremony) and a special mass for Santa Lucía. A meeting was held at which it was decided that Fuensalida and Estrada should go to Tipu, while Becerril should attempt to reduce the coastal towns and Tejero should stay behind at Bacalar for the time being. Before leaving Fuensalida made a public confession of his faith in Maya before his colleagues and an assembly of Spaniards and Mayas.

In his sermon, which was directed principally toward those Indians who were recruited to accompany Fuensalida and Estrada to Tipu, he stressed the need for faith in the event of death at the hands of the rebels:

He encouraged the Indians who were accompanying them that trusting in God they should not fear the rebels, since they were going in peace, and begging them to do the same. And if something else were to happen they should be thankful that they were allowed to die for His love.

In order to convert those idolatrous Indians to His service, God would give them the strength and courage to tolerate death and reward them with the glorious prize of eternal life.⁸

The friars' Maya companions comprised fourteen paddlers and guides from San Juan Extramuros under the leadership of Don Francisco Chable, their alcalde. This party left Bacalar in the secular priest's falca, stopping first at Chinam, where Fuensalida said mass, baptized children, and confessed some of the adults. Here he found that the town's fiscal was in charge of sending the children to the church every day to learn to recite the catechism. At Chinam the party was joined by the town's alcalde, Andrés Pech, who was a skilled navigator and fisherman, along with three men and two women, whose task it would be to make the tortillas.

When they reached Lamanai on New River Lagoon, they found that the houses and church at Lamanai had been burned. They understood that their approach had been observed by spies sent by a group of Tipuans who were in the area, and the inhabitants of Lamanai had apparently fled with the Tipuans just before they had entered the lake.⁹ They crossed the lake and left the falca hidden in the underbrush at a "port" on the south end known as Colmots, heading by foot along the path across the Cancanilla toward the Belize River.

Along the path leading to the main river they stopped at a "rancho" called Boxelac (from *boxel*, turtle shell?). At that point Fuensalida faced resistance when he tried to convince some of the Mayas in his party to carry a letter to Tipu announcing their arrival and requesting canoes to carry them upstream to Tipu. Although the Mayas "were certain that they would kill whoever took it," the two alcaldes, Don Francisco Chable and Don Andrés Pech, ultimately agreed to go.

While they waited for the messengers, the Maya paddlers began to clear the thick weed growth along the path to the river, where they came across some objects along the path that were "like statues of men dressed as Spaniards." The messengers who had gone before had tossed some "idols" placed next to these statues into the bush. Fuensalida later regretted that they had not been left where they had been placed, as he would have liked to see how they had been set up. His Maya companions explained to him

that this meant that the rebels had closed the route so that the Spaniards would not be able to pass by, and that their idols guarded the way

and would stop and enchant anyone who tried to pass by them, a deception [surmised the writer] of which the devil had persuaded them and to whom they offered incense while idolatrizing.¹⁰

Fuensalida and his party passed unharmed by these images to a cacao orchard on the Belize River known as "the hamlet where Chantome had been." There they found the messengers, who had been waiting for them for three days with some of the "rebels" who had previously lived at Holpatin further upstream. They reported that Holpatin had been abandoned and burned some time ago and that by then it was completely overgrown.

The former inhabitants of Holpatin, Fuensalida claimed, had been ordered by the Tipuans to keep watch upstream for any passersby. They had accepted the letter carried by the messengers but had decided to see for themselves why the friars had come. The group included the town's cacique, Don Pedro Noh, his sons, and six other Indians. They were painted and had allowed their hair to grow long as a sign of their rebel state. Noh, however, was "very ladinoized" and offered a wild fowl to the friars. Fuensalida's Maya companions warned him that the fowl was a "bad sign" whose real meaning was war, not peace.¹¹

The group from Holpatin then took the friars and their Maya companions in their canoes upstream to the riverside town of Zaczuz. There they found that the houses and church had been burned as at Lamanai, and the bell had been thrown into the underbrush. (In contrast, it will be recalled, in 1631 the bells at Xibun and Soite had been carried by the runaways to their new locations.)

Once they had arrived, Don Pedro Noh went up to two of the Maya visitors and felt along their chests for signs of personal defenses. Finding none he taunted them, saying

"cex a cota mazcab? What happened to your coats of mail?" He slapped them lightly and asked them again in their language, "where are your coats of mail, you who are so brave?" Whereupon those he was speaking to became very upset. This was because they had gone before with the Spaniards of Salamanca to search for Indians who had fled and hidden in the forests of that province.¹²

The victims of these verbal threats ran back to Chantome, leaving the friars with only three Mayas from Bacalar and one Lázaro Pech from Kini, whom they had brought as their servant at the outset of their trip.

The rest, including those from Chinam, had apparently deserted them earlier out of fright.

Don Pedro Noh and his party left the visitors behind at Zaczuz with one of their canoes while they went ahead to deliver the letter to Tipu. The friars discovered that Noh had apparently ordered some of the inhabitants of Zaczuz to return and watch over the needs of the visitors. The cacique of Zaczuz, Don Francisco Yam, allowed the friars to stay in his cacao orchard¹³ and visited them daily with maize tortillas, a hen, eggs, and beans. Fuensalida learned that when the inhabitants of Zaczuz abandoned and burned the town they had gone three leagues up into the mountains ("*serranías*," apparently the Maya Mountains), where they constructed a new town that they called Hubelna. The new settlement was near a small river known as Yaxteel Ahau, which flowed out of the mountains into the Belize River near Zaczuz. In the Appendix it is suggested that this might have been Roaring Creek or another river further upstream.

Eventually a party of about a dozen Tipuans led by a "captain" named Gaspar Chuc arrived at Zaczuz with a written reply to their letter and a gift of cacao, vanilla, and some slabs of chocolate. They were painted and carried bows and arrows. The message was direct—the friars should not proceed to Tipu "because the Indians did not want to receive them." When Fuensalida's letter had been read aloud

some of them had become excited and had run away. For this reason they had not brought canoes to carry [the friars to Tipu]; therefore, they could return to Salamanca. The truth of this was confirmed when they saw that the letter came without any signature, whereas it is usual when they respond for the cacique, alcaldes, principales, and scribe to sign, and to write the names of those who do not know how to sign.¹⁴

Undaunted by the obvious warning that they should not attempt to travel to Tipu, the friars nonetheless attempted to convince Chuc to take them there by land. Chuc appeared partially moved to do so but put them off by saying: "Fathers, wait here while I go, and on next Thursday (this happened on Monday) I will bring you canoes, and Indians will come to serve you."

By this time the friars were left alone with only Don Francisco Chable (the alcalde of San Juan Extramuros) and Lázaro Pech, as the two other Mayas had gone off to Hubelna, apparently with the cacique Don Francisco Yam. Fuensalida said mass daily, praying with Estrada for the Indians' souls and periodically saying the Ave María while sounding the

town's bell, which Lázaro Pech had found lying in the bush. The Tipuans failed to return the following Thursday, and another week passed with no sign of them. Fearing that something was amiss and that they might be ambushed in the night, the friars sent Chable and Pech with a letter to Don Francisco Yam at Hubelna asking that he come to take them there. It was already July 1. The rainy season had begun, and they were without cover in the cacao grove.

The messengers returned late the same night with news that Yam and others would come for them the next morning. The cacique was true to his word, but when the friars arrived at Hubelna, soaked to the skin by the drenching rains, the "Indians did not come out to greet them as they almost always did, which showed the friars that they were not willing to submit to the will of God and the king."¹⁵

Yam put the friars up in his simple bush house, where they were provided with two beds. They soon discovered that the cacique had invited a large group of armed and painted Tipuans shortly after their arrival. Some of the visitors stayed at the other end of the town "dancing and drunkenly worshipping their idols." Another group of them behaved in a similar fashion in the house next door, shouting and making a great deal of noise. When Lázaro Pech and two of the Mayas from Bacalar went to this house to see what was going on they were apprehended, painted up, and forced to join in the activities. Pech was stripped, relieved of his machete, and mistreated more than the others "because they knew he was the friars' servant."

Fray Juan de Estrada discovered this state of affairs when he went to check on Pech and the others. He was told that one of the Tipuans in the house was "a priest of the idolatry who said mass for them using his food of tortillas and pozole drink. The other idolatrous Indians told him that *this* was the true mass, not the one said by his friend." Horrified and angered, Fray Juan nonetheless managed to secure his friends' release and returned with them to rejoin Fuensalida in Yam's house. From there the friars sent word to Yam, asking that the cacique gather everyone together to hear them read the letters they were carrying from the governor and the bishop.

Yam complied with this request, and a large number crowded into the house to hear Fuensalida read the letters in Maya. The governor's letter promised them pardon "for all the evil they had done," absolution from payment of past tributes and taxes, and freedom from any payments for four or five more years. For their part, the rebels would have to "submit to the authority of the church and governor." Fuensalida offered to stay behind as a hostage while their representatives went with

Fray Juan to Mérida to confirm an agreement with the governor. Upon hearing this message, one by one the disgusted audience began silently to depart until the friars were left alone with the cacique.

That evening at dusk a party of Hubelna Mayas entered the cacique's house and took away some of the things that the friars had brought with them, leaving them alone with Lázaro Pech. The three from Bacalar were somewhere else, and they spent a long night praying for their companions' welfare.

The next morning they were greeted by a clamor of noise outside the house. Lázaro Pech ran out and saw a "procession" approaching, led by a number of young boys beating on conch shells "like the ones they use in war." Following them marched the "*capitán principal*" and a group of men carrying spears. Finally "came the rest, ready for battle with their bows and arrows and all painted up, such that they looked like painted demons." With masterful understatement, Pech came back into the house and said, "Fathers, here come the Indians."

The war party surrounded the house. Some went inside, and someone, probably the capitán principal, said: "*Te, te, tihulech cech mam.* May God protect you. Your time has come, grandfather." Some of the intruders started to sit down, but the capitán told them harshly to get up, whereupon Pech and the friars were seized, thrown to the ground, and their hands tied behind them. Some of their attackers had machetes with which they threatened them, but their words were even more to the point: "Let the governor come. Let the king come. Let the Spanish come. We are ready to fight them. Now go and tell them." A man named Kuxeb, standing next to Fuensalida with a large machete in his hand, said to the friar: "Did I not say to you, 'what do you want here?' when I saw you in the orchard? Did I not give you something to eat because you did not return to Bacalar?"

Finally, Fuensalida heard of past events that had come back to haunt him: "Others threatened to kill him because he and Father Orbita had destroyed the Itzas' idol Tzimin Chac . . . and thereby killed their god. Thus he knew there were Itza Indians mixed in with them." Fuensalida later recalled a remarkable dialogue that followed upon this threat:

Because they were in such a dangerous position and Father Fray Juan de Estrada saw that his comisario was being threatened so, he encouraged him with great spirit saying, "Take courage, our father, for the love of God." The companion said to the Indians, "Kill me. Don't kill our old father, who is God's priest and who administers the holy sacra-

ments. He is needed for this. Kill me. I am not necessary, nor am I good for anything, but he is." To this the capitán principal said, "Don't fear. We don't have to kill you, but we must kill your companion because he killed our god."

Lázaro Pech joined in with an inspired sermon of his own, which Fuensalida later recalled must have been spoken through him by the Holy Spirit: "Why do you have to kill us, for we have not harmed you nor did we come to do so? We came to make you good Christians and turn you to God so that He might pardon you. For this these fathers came, but you are like Judas, who wanted to kill the Christ of God, our holy priest." As friars usually did in such dire situations, Fuensalida preached almost nonstop throughout the proceedings.

While all this was going on the intruders tore open the boxes containing the friars' ornaments and clothing. They broke the images into pieces and destroyed a crucifix, "saying a thousand blasphemies that are too horrible to mention as they broke it." Whereupon Kuxeb said to Fuensalida: "Bictun, uthan a kuul cech mam? What does your God say to you now, grandfather?"

Although Fuensalida feared that they would either be tied to a tree and shot at with arrows or taken to Tipu to be killed, he and his two companions were finally untied and helped to their feet. They were thereupon thrown out of Hubelna

with as many screams and whistles as when they let a bull into a plaza, insulting them verbally, making faces at them, sticking their fingers in their mouths, and creating such confusion and outrage that the account says that it was necessary to see it to believe it: "It can only be that some barbarians would know how to do this." And the father comisario says that he would not have believed it or understood it of macehuales if he had not seen it and had it happen to him.¹⁶

As they left town they were joined by the three others from Bacalar, who had been hiding the night before. The entire party was first escorted by archers to the cacao orchard at Zaczuz; from there others took them along the stream called Yaxteel Ahau to retrieve the canoe that had been left for them by Don Pedro Noh of Holpatin. One of their escorts returned the chalice, altar, missal, and chrismatory that had been taken from them earlier. Later on, the Bacalar Mayas told Fuensalida that it was probably because Noh had provided the canoe for them that he had

not dared to help them at Hubelna. They reasoned that Noh and his companions must have been threatened by the rebels with the punishment of *pechni*, "which was to break their noses and later kill them."¹⁷

Provided with a canoe but with no provisions whatsoever, they began the journey back to Bacalar. They travelled first along the Belize River, which was heavily swollen by the rains. From there, fearing attacks by rebel Mayas, they rushed across land to reach Boxelac in a single day. On the next day they reached Colmotez on New River Lagoon, where they had left the falca they had brought from Bacalar. The falca had been burned by the rebels, and their salt had been stolen; the beans and maize they had left behind had been thrown into the water. Eventually two small old canoes, abandoned at the outbreak of the rebellion, were found in the mud. These the expert boatmen from Bacalar repaired with pieces taken from other broken canoes and from an abandoned building in the pine forest that had been used for extracting resin. They found a few nails, caulked the boats with pieces of their clothing, and "pitched" them with dirt found along the beach that resembled fuller's earth (*greda*).

In these canoes they set out the next day, with Fray Bartolomé and Fray Juan in one of them, paddled by Lázaro Pech in front and piloted by Francisco Chable at the stern. The other three from Bacalar went in the other canoe straight to Lamanai, where they hoped to catch fish and turtles and search in the deserted town for plantains to make bread. Fuensalida and the others followed along later. Upon nearing Lamanai, Fuensalida suggested that they tie up there in order to await their companions. Chable, however, advised that this would be unwise: "Fathers, you don't know the Indians as I do. Let's continue paddling on ahead, as they might have gone to look for those of Laimaná who are their relatives there and come tonight to kill us."¹⁸

That night, because of Chable's fears, these four stayed four leagues further along than the spot they had arranged for their rendezvous with the others. Eventually, however, these fears turned out to be unfounded, and several days later the two groups were reunited along the New River at a spot called Bolon Kak (translated by Fuensalida as "nine fires"). Paddling for part of the day, much of the night, and part of the next day, they finally reached the mouth of the New River.

While Andrés Chi and Lázaro Pech went on ahead to Bacalar to get a safer boat to carry the friars back, the others were nearly capsized in Corozal Bay as they sought to paddle to a rancho where they hoped to find some food. The next day those left behind were met by the rescue party from Bacalar near the mouth of the Río Hondo, whom they first

saw paddling toward "a port that is called El Rancho del Obispo." This is perhaps the earliest known reference to the place later known as Payo Obispo, the location of modern Ciudad Chetumal.

Recalling these harrowing experiences, Fuensalida later wrote that "It is certain that this entire trip, forty days from the time we left Bacalar until we returned, was a continuous miracle." A man possessed of a vivid memory, Fuensalida recounted his experiences in details that are unique for the era and place. But López de Cogolludo, his interpreter, was even more impressed by the esteem and affection in which he held the servant Lázaro Pech. In the introduction to his account, Fuensalida had written of Pech: "Our worthy companion was like an angel in the way he served us, for me in particular, as I will show in this, our account." Later he added:

This Indian was so good and kind that at the bogs, streams, and creeks on the path from Cancanilla, as well as other bad spots, he would take his pack across and then return for me and take me across on his shoulders until we got out. I do not know a single Spanish Christian who would do what this Indian did except a saint. It was even more incredible to see it than to talk or read about it here.¹⁹

Even though the friar owed his life to Lázaro Pech, such moving praise by a Spaniard for an Indian is a rare high point in the literature of the time.

Upon their return to Bacalar, Fuensalida sent Fray Juan de Estrada back to Mérida with letters that included his first written account of the journey.²⁰ In his letters he wrote that only a military solution would bring the rebels back to the fold and that without such assistance the friars might as well pack up and leave. In characteristically Franciscan fashion, however, he said that he would not refuse to journey to Tipu again should that be the orders he received.

Once he had heard the "long-winded" account as read by Estrada, the governor expressed displeasure that the friars had tried to make the trip to Tipu so soon. Estrada defended their actions on the ground that the rains had been about to start and that travel would have been impossible later. As for Fuensalida, he later wrote that "it is always one's responsibility to convert the sinner to the Lord without delay."²¹ In any event, the governor decided against a military solution as he had no authorization from the crown. The provincial decided that Fuensalida should return to the convent at Mérida and recuperate from the fatigue and illnesses he suffered as a result of the entrada, and Estrada was in-

structed to stay on so that his own illnesses could be treated. Fuensalida arrived at Mérida in poor health in early October. Estrada never recovered, and died in 1646 of ailments brought on by his unfortunate adventures in Dzuluinicob.²²

PIRATES AND PRIESTS IN THE MANCHE CHOL AND COASTAL TOWNS

Although Fuensalida met only headstrong resistance in the Tipu-controlled region of the upper Belize River, his companions Fray Bartolomé Becerril and Fray Martín Tejero found that the coastal towns of Belize could be more readily pacified and reduced. Some of these towns were Manche Chol and were clearly outside the orbit of Tipu's influence during the rebellion. Others had been involved in the rebellion but were so far removed physically from the headquarters at Tipu that they were either unable or disinclined to mount any resistance. Complicating the participation of the latter towns in the continuing resistance was a marked increase in piracy activities that were soon to force the evacuation of Bacalar itself.²³

While Fuensalida was on his entrada to the Belize River towns, Becerril attempted to recruit the principales of some of the Bacalar province towns—presumably those who had been resettled near the villa—to guide him to certain rebel leaders. They refused, however, claiming that the rebels had threatened to kill them if they were to take friars to them. He nonetheless traveled down the Belize coast to the Manche Chol area and found some unconverted fugitives from Campin in the area of Soite and Cehake near the mouth of the Sittee (or Soite) River.²⁴ These he baptised and catechized and settled in Soite and Cehake. They ultimately brought him "a large quantity of stone and pottery idols of abominable figures and other instruments with which they offer sacrifices to the devil."

Later in 1641 Tejero traveled to the coastal town of Manan, which, it was claimed, had been involved in the rebellion.²⁵ While on this mission he was stranded by a storm for thirteen days on a small island but at some point managed to reduce the inhabitants of Manan. He apparently encountered no resistance and managed to "convert" them and baptize the children. A storm—presumably the same one—resulted in the flooding of Manan, and the newly reduced inhabitants abandoned the town. He later returned to Manan from Bacalar with a Spaniard named Lucas

de San Miguel, and together they resettled the inhabitants on an island named Zula, "because they chose it to live on."

Dutch pirates later captured Tejero and San Miguel and held them prisoner for some time. The pirates also raided the recently reduced towns of Soite and Cehake, taking all of their food stores with them. After he was released, Tejero managed to send maize and beans from Bacalar in order to prevent the abandonment of the raided towns. He returned to the towns, where he learned that other unconverted Manche Chols at Campin wanted him to go there and baptize them. Campin had recently been visited by the Dominican Fray Francisco de Triana from Verapaz; the inhabitants of Campin wanted him replaced by Tejero, who received a letter from Triana at Soite encouraging Tejero to accept the invitation to visit Campin.

It would appear that Soite and Cehake comprised a mixture of Yucatec and Manche Chol Mayas at this time, although Campin itself was an exclusively Manche Chol town. The alcalde of Soite was one Don Diego Canche, a Yucatec-speaker who also knew the Manche Chol language and was in regular communication with Campin. In October 1642 Canche took Tejero's message to Campin; he returned in eight days with instructions that Tejero should meet the inhabitants of Campin at the mouth of their river, which Thompson believed to be Monkey River.²⁶

Tejero found a canoe waiting for him at the assigned place and was taken three days upstream to a small village of ten men, two of whom had been Christianized many years earlier. These claimed—despite evidence that Fray Francisco Triana had been in the area—that no priest had visited them for twenty-five years. These Manche Chols told Tejero that beyond the nearest mountain was a settlement of Manche Chols with an idol more than a vara in height that they wanted to bring him.

Tejero sent for the inhabitants of the town but said that he did not want to see the idol at that time. Eventually seventy-three men, women, and children arrived at the village where he was staying. He gave them some cotton cloths (*patíes*) "with which they could cover their private parts," said mass daily for them, and taught them the catechism. They insisted, according to Tejero's account, that he baptize and marry them and that he cut their hair like that of the Christian Indians he had brought with him.

Tejero, a man of unusual patience and caution, would have preferred to spend more time in teaching them the catechism before performing the baptisms and marriages. Ultimately, however, he did baptize and marry them "to the women that they brought with them so that they would not have more than one." He had brought the images of San Mi-

guel Arcángel, San Gerónimo, and San Francisco with him, and of these the Manche Chols asked that he assign one as their patron saint. Tejero had them draw lots in order to choose one of the three. San Francisco was chosen after a child had drawn the name of San Francisco three times in a row. The same night the Indians cut one another's hair in the final act symbolizing their conversion.

After Tejero had left this settlement to return to Bacalar, promising to come back the next year to form a proper pueblo, "the enemy went to where he had left them and robbed them of what they had, and so they ran away to the mountains again." Tejero never returned, as a few days later the same pirates captured Bacalar itself and put an end to all effective missionary efforts in the province south of the Río Hondo.

PIRACY AND THE FINAL COLLAPSE OF THE BACALAR PROVINCE

In early 1643 the bishop of Yucatan wrote to the king that more than 300 families from eight Bacalar province towns had been resettled around the rebel headquarters town of Tipu. A remaining 150 families from six small settlements had remained loyal to the Spanish, but some of these had also fled to the forests "either out of fear that they would be carried off by the rebels or for not being able to tolerate the weight of work, being so few." Apparently referring to Tejero's activities along the coast, he noted that only recently had some of the runaways begun to return to their original towns.²⁷ This information, however, was already out of date.

Sometime in late 1642, the pirate Diego Lucifer de los Reyes el Mulato sacked Campeche and began to terrorize the coastline from Bacalar to the Golfo Dulce.²⁸ With more than seventy men from "different nations," he first kidnapped a number of Indians all the way from Soite to Honduras, taking them to an island in Honduras, where the pirates abused the women sexually and forced the men to repair and clean their ships.²⁹ This was presumably the occasion on which, in early November, the Manche Chol town visited by Tejero was raided.

During this period the governor of Yucatan had assigned a carrier to take lawsuit documents to Guatemala via Bacalar. The carrier turned the task over to several residents of Bacalar, who started out on their journey in four canoes but were attacked by Diego el Mulato four days after leaving the villa at the "point of Río Balis."³⁰ The pirates took two or three of their boats and the box containing the documents, thinking that it was full of coins. The victims headed back to Bacalar via Punta de Chinam

but were attacked and tied up by the pirates within sight of the villa about midnight on 22 November.

Once in Bacalar, the pirates began to rob the houses:

and they profaned the holiest sacrament, playing with it and throwing it on the ground, stealing all the gold and silver that there was in the said church—ornaments, chasubles, and altar hangings (making flags of those). They undressed the images, chopped them to pieces with axes, and dressed up in mockery. *O dolor!* They covered them with white dirt [?], shot at them with harquebuses, and carried off the bells and the silver that they had taken from his majesty.³¹

Fray Bartolomé Becerril's Indian servant had three of his fingers chopped off by a pirate's cutlass, and the pirates fired pistols at Becerril, who managed to escape unharmed while trying to rescue the Sacrament. Diego el Mulato kidnapped Manuel Rodríguez and Sebastián Rodríguez (who had been among those captured in the boats heading toward Guatemala) as well as Luís Fernández, a mulatto, and two Indians.³² The fate of the Bacalar Spaniards and the mulatto is unknown, but the Indians, who helped the pirates carry away their loot, were allowed to return to tell the tale. The total value of what was taken was variously estimated at between 12,000 and 16,000 pesos, most of which comprised the treasure of the church; the wealth of the treasury amounted to only 800 pesos.

The governor was at a loss to know what to do to assist the victims of Bacalar, who by early 1643 were still hiding out elsewhere along the shore of Lake Bacalar. Although there were only thirty men capable of bearing arms, he was hesitant to force them to abandon the villa, as "the vecinos are so wretched and timorous that I can't bear to do it to them." He asked for royal permission to purchase firearms and ammunition for them from the excise tax revenues, cautioning that if the villa were depopulated even the pacified Mayas would take the opportunity to join the rebels and carry out "entradas and other damages."

López de Cogolludo wrote that "this disgrace," referring to the pirate attack, "was the main reason that the reduction was so ineffectual, for after it no Indian wanted to guide the religious." Becerril and Tejero were withdrawn from the province sometime in 1643 and replaced by a secular priest.

New Reductions in the Bacalar Province, 1644.

Soon after Fray Martín Tejero and Fray Bartolomé Becerril departed Bacalar they were reassigned to an equally ambitious undertaking as

part of a three-pronged reduction that swept across the entire peninsula, from Campeche to the northern Bacalar province. We know little about the motivation for this massive reduction effort, although it appears to have been carried out as a response to the frustrations that followed upon the complete lack of success met by Fuensalida's mission efforts to the Tipu region and the virtual destruction of what little remained of the Bacalar province by buccaneers.

According to López de Cogolludo, this ambitious undertaking took place during the brief term of Governor Francisco Nuñez Melian (31 December 1643 to 14 April 1644).³³ Contemporary sources make it clear, however, that although it was organized during this period, the actual reductions took place during the governorship of Enrique de Avila y Pacheco (14 April to 28 June 1644).³⁴ Leading the enterprise was the *maestre de campo*, Juan de Salazar, who was assigned the eastern *partido* of the Costa and Valladolid, including Chancénote and Cozumel; he was accompanied by Tejero. Captain Gaspar León de Salazar, who took Becerril with him, was assigned the western *partido* of Camino Real, including Campeche. Finally, the southern *partido* of the Sierra was assigned to Antonio Magaña de Solís (sometimes referred to as Antonio Orantes Solís), who went as far as Ichmul and the Bacalar province with Fray Pedro de la Peña.

Although we do not know how far Magaña de Solís and de la Peña penetrated into Bacalar, it was claimed that their reduction took two and one-half months in "towns and hamlets, unpopulated forests." In all they reduced about 1,900 men, women, and children, many of whom were runaways or fugitives with unbaptized children as old as eighteen years. Some of those captured from the forest had been cantores in their original towns, had held offices in town cabildos, and had served Spaniards in their homes. As at Ixpimienta in 1622, many of the men were said to have run away, leaving their wives behind in their original towns and forming new unions in the forest towns. From this description it appears that this prong of the reduction had reached into the forests south or southeast of Ichmul, perhaps near the Pimienta region.³⁵

The total number of persons reduced in this enterprise was impressive:

Eastern reduction	5,081
Western reduction	2,442
Southern reduction	<u>1,900</u>
Total	9,423

By and large the effort appears to have been centered in the frontier regions not only of the southeast but also of the northeast and the southwest. This may well have been the first of the truly large-scale reductions that were to characterize so much of the second half of the seventeenth century. In contrast to the huge 1632 reduction, which attempted to counteract the process of relatively localized "dispersion" (to use Fariss's apt term) away from centralized population centers, these later reductions were massive sweeps through vast territories of genuinely fugitive populations. In all cases the goal was to reduce populations to their original communities, in contrast to specialized entradas such as those of Mirones, which had as its ultimate goal the pacification of independent polities in their localized settings.

Certain factors were at work—beginning in 1638 with the resistance movement in the Bacalar province—that would make the governance of Yucatan's native population increasingly difficult. The ultimate transformation of this localized resistance movement into a successful anti-Spanish *rebellion* centered at Tipu apparently heralded an increase in the number of Mayas who were willing to take the risk of seeking refuge in regions far distant from Spanish control. The Pimienta region, a popular refuge zone since the early 1620s, took its place as only one of several such regions. The area south of Sahcabchen toward Tah Itza, in particular, became an even more troublesome zone of fugitives during the 1650s and 1660s. The anti-Spanish prophecies of Katun 1 Ahau may have been a primary inspiration for the beginning of this increased flight, reinforced by the belief that Tah Itza had become a power that would ultimately win out in the contest between Mayas and Spaniards for control over the peninsula.

The period beginning in 1638 also witnessed the marked increase of foreign piracy along the coasts of the peninsula. On the one hand fear of pirate attacks and kidnappings along the coast and even considerable distances inland must have caused many Mayas to seek refuge toward the interior, well away from non-Spanish foreign penetration. And on the other, a rise in such attacks would have stimulated the conviction that another era of history was in its beginning stages—one in which the contest for the seas was being played out among foreign powers who would wipe each other out and leave the peninsula to its original inhabitants. López de Cogolludo was probably correct in his observation that the sacking of Bacalar by Diego el Mulato in 1642 spelled the end of Spanish hopes to recapture the souls of the Bacalar-province Mayas, for the effect of the collapse of the villa of Bacalar almost exactly on its one-

hundredth anniversary spelled the beginning of the end of a century of colonial domination.

The Abandonment of Salamanca de Bacalar

Bacalar was sacked again in 1648. This time a pirate named Abraham killed one vecino, wounded three others, and took the women to a place called Cayos about forty leagues along the coast. Two months later they were rescued by a party of Spaniards and Mayas from the villa, but this event seems to have been the last straw.³⁶ Shortly thereafter the inhabitants of Salamanca de Bacalar moved the villa to a new location at the old Maya town of Pacha along the road to Valladolid.³⁷ Spanish control over Chetumal and Dzuluinicob was at an end, and the way was open for the British occupation of Belize and a new era of colonial history.

THE END OF THE KATUN 1 AHAU: TIPU UNREVISITED

Between 1652 and 1654 one Captain Francisco Pérez of Bacalar, newly located at Pacha, struggled to regain almost singlehandedly what had been lost in Belize as a result of the Tipu rebellion. He failed completely in his efforts, but in the saga of his attempt we can comprehend more fully the effects of this rebellion and the hopelessness of Spanish efforts to reconstitute the Bacalar province as a colonial territory. Scholes and Thompson first brought Pérez's activities to our attention through their excellent analysis of his entradas into Dzuluinicob and his efforts to take a census of the town of Tipu and other rebel communities. Their description of the documents in question was written without full knowledge of related events that this book has attempted to understand in greater depth.³⁸ My aim is to clarify this broader context, but the interested reader should consult their article for details not covered here.

The account of Pérez's entradas is contained in various sections of a particularly complex, messy set of petitions and testimonies in which various Spanish, mulatto, and Maya witnesses who participated with Pérez describe what had happened. Pérez, of course, sought a royal dispensation for his bravery, despite the unsuccessful outcome. As Scholes and Thompson wrote, Pérez was "an ambitious man with an eye to the main chance."³⁹ The chronicle of his ambitions can be summarized as follows.

Capture of Uatibal and Chanlacan by Dutch Pirates and Their Removal to the Interior, Late 1652

Upon the death in August 1652 of Governor García de Valdés Osorio, Conde de Marcel de Peñalva, the *alcaldes ordinarios* of Mérida took over the provincial government. As *alcalde* of Bacalar, Francisco Pérez became interim governor of the Bacalar province. Sometime before December he learned that some of the Indians of Uatibal⁴⁰ and Chanlacan, near present-day Corozal Bay in northern Belize, had been kidnapped by Dutch pirates. These pirates, like those of the previous decade, were scouring the coast for Indian slaves, stealing the food supplies of any town they attacked. Pérez requisitioned maize from unnamed interior towns for those who remained so that they would not run away due to famine conditions. He sent four *vecinos* from Bacalar to oversee their removal to a safer location further inland.

We may assume that at this time Pérez held Uatibal and Chanlacan in *encomienda*, which would explain his intense interest in seeing to the protection and reduction of these towns. Although neither of them had been mentioned in any of the correspondence pertaining to the earlier rebellion, it appears that both had emerged intact as continuing "loyal" towns.

Flight and Reduction at Uatibal and Chanlacan, 1654

In 1654, while Pérez was again serving as *alcalde ordinario* of Bacalar, the recently relocated inhabitants of Chanlacan and Uatibal abandoned their towns and burned their houses, running off to the forest. Pérez requested and received an order from Governor Pedro Saenz Izquierdo to search for the runaways and reduce them to their relocated town. On his first *entrada* he went to look for the runaways but had to return as there was too much flooding.

On 23 October of that year, the *cabildo* of Bacalar named Pérez as the head of a group of six Spaniards and fifteen Indians to pursue a second *entrada* on which they were to search for fifteen men and their wives and children who had run away from Uatibal. These were reputed to be at some lakes called Cantenal, twenty leagues south of Bacalar. In October he set out on this second attempt with five Spaniards and fifteen loyal Mayas, most of whom were from Pacha, in two old canoes that they found and lashed together as a *falca*. They found the runaways in several small hamlets and reduced 200 adults and children back to their original towns. They failed to capture eight, however, who ran on to the towns of Holpachay and Holzuz, which were located near Tipu. On this

occasion Pérez claimed that he risked being captured by pirates who encircled him along the coast while he was looking for the runaways. He was sick with chills and fever—apparently malaria—that plagued him throughout his ventures. Support troops from Yucatan were sent to aid in this entrada but had to turn back from Chunhuhub because of rains and flooding.

Entrada to Holzuz and Holpachay, 1655

On 13 May 1655 the governor issued Pérez a commission to pursue an entrada to reduce and resettle not only those Mayas who had run away to Holzuz and Holpachay—about seventy leagues from Bacalar-Pacha on the way to Tipu—but in addition all the runaway Indians that he could find in the montaña. Pérez interpreted this broadly, and presumably correctly, to include all of those who had rebelled beginning as early as 1637.

Following his entrada the previous October Pérez had notified the governor that he had found Indian travellers who had run away from their homes eighteen years earlier and were now living at Tipu. As a result of this knowledge and the success of his October entrada, he requested this new commission to reduce at his own cost whatever additional runaways he could find.

Pérez pursued the entrada with ten Spanish vecinos and sixty loyal Indians from Pacha and San Juan Extramuros (which had apparently moved with Bacalar to the new location). He was successful in reaching the two towns in question and rounding up not only the runaways he sought but also a number of Tipuans. All of these he brought to settlements near Bacalar-Pacha. His claimed reductions were as follow:

Runaways from Uabital and Chanlacan	48
(adults and children)	
Tipuans (adult males)	17
Tipuans (women and children)	<u>45</u>
Total adults and children	110

These particular Tipuans were said by witnesses to have been in a state of rebellion for the past *twenty* years.

The First Attempt to Reduce Tipu, June–July 1655

On about June 20 Pérez left Bacalar again, this time to reduce Tipu itself and the rest of the rebel towns; this was interpreted by the Bacalar cabildo as his charge from the governor. He arrived at Holzuz, the port

from which one embarked to go to the "*rancherías* and town of Tipu" and from there sent six of the Mayas he had brought with him to call the caciques and principales of Tipu to come before him at Holzuz. The messengers were to return within six days. He waited for twelve days, but they did not return. Finding himself short of supplies and perishing from the mosquitos, he decided to return to Bacalar, leaving behind the Indians he had taken, with instructions to send the caciques and principales to Bacalar to talk with him there. The route that Pérez had taken and by which he returned was by sea and then up the river to Holzuz. Although Scholes and Thompson believed that Holzuz (whose name they translated as "sandy landing place") was at the southeast end of New River Lagoon, it is more likely that it was near the mouth of the Belize River.⁴¹

Pérez arrived in Bacalar on July 26, thirty-six days after he had left on this mission, and on July 30 ten Tipuans and two principales from Tipu showed up in Bacalar looking for him. They reported that they had been disappointed not to find him at Holzuz, having come there as part of a total party of seventy Mayas. These, it was claimed, were all desirous of communicating with him and being reduced. The party who visited him were sent to find out when he wished to return and settle them, warning, however that he could not travel then because of the bad condition of the route. They would receive him peacefully, and he could travel alone, without fear. This information was reported to the governor by the secular priest of Bacalar, Lic. Pedro Juan Fernández, and by the cabildo, which comprised the alcalde Juan Gómez de Santoyo and the regidores Juan Martín de los Cedros and Juan de Ascorra. Leonardo Sánchez de Aguilar was the scribe.

The Matrícula of Chunukum: November 1655

Pérez tried to reach Tipu yet again, leaving on October 5 in the midst of the rains. This time he hoped to reach Tipu, Lucu, and Zaczuz, and he took with him a letter from the governor to the Indians, translated into Maya, that apparently promised them amnesty. Upon reaching the "port" of Chunukum, one of the rebel towns, however, they found that the route was so bad that they could go no further. He therefore sent messengers to Tipu, Lucu, and Zaczuz with instructions that the principales and all the other Indians should come to see him and hear the governor's letter.

Upon receiving this message "all the principales and other Indians that there were in the said towns" came to see him at Chunukum, except for those who were sick. In all, the initial delegations comprised 110 men

plus some women and children; in addition, there were 23 men in Chunukum itself. Pérez gave the governor's letter and his commission to the scribe of these villages, who read these aloud to the gathering. The Indians were said to be pleased by these documents, which required that they all be matriculated. Pérez reportedly completed the matrícula without incident. They told him (with dubious sincerity) that on his next trip he would find a church built in Chunukum where the priest could say mass, and that when he called on them next they would come to receive them.

The matrícula itself was prepared on 6 November 1655 at Chunukum. The complete transcript was published by Scholes and Thompson, who also discussed various aspects of this important and most unusual census.⁴² A summary of the census by sex, marital status, and town of origin is presented in Table 8.1.⁴³ The total number of individuals recorded (184 adult males, 154 adult females, and 103 children) exceeds the total number already reported to have been in Chunukum in addition to those who came from Tipu to hear the governor's letter. We may assume, therefore, that others continued to arrive at Chunukum while Pérez prepared to begin the count.

Of the total of 441 individuals who were counted, 314 were listed as being from the town of Tipu and all but 30 of the remaining 127 were identified as inhabitants of nine other towns: Zaczuz, Zacatan, Holpatin, Chanlacan, Mayapan, Chinam, Soite, Xibun, and Lucu. The balance of 30 was labeled "*indios del monte*"—forest Indians. There were no inhabitants of Uatibal, Holzuz, or Holpachay, as these had been resettled elsewhere several months earlier.

Like most such matrículas, this one is a person-by-person listing of adults by name, indicating marriage pairings or consensual unions and the number of children with each pair. The sex of children is clear only when there is a single child (*hijo* or *hija*), as multiple children are all identified as *hijos*. For those identified as Tipuans, the first 53 men and 43 women, in addition to several widowers, are listed in a form that makes it appear that these individuals were married by the church. In this form, a couple with children would appear as follows (the H indicating the number of children):

Juan Ku, Susana Tut de Tipu con una hija	2H1
Andrés Ku, Catalina Hau, Tipu	2Ho

In several cases persons without an indicated spouse appear in the same form:

Baltasar Cen, Tipu con un hijo 1Ho

The remaining couples at Tipu, as well as all other couples listed in the matrícula, are recorded without this convention, as in the following examples:

Juan Uicab, Andrea Chan, Tipu con un hijo 3
Juan Canche, Clara Chable con dos hijos
Chuen Can, varón, Ixetznab ca Vih, hembra, Tipu

I believe that those couples who were not listed in the xHx form were regarded by the census taker as living in consensual unions, and I have listed them accordingly in Table 8.1 as "unmarried males with partners" or "unmarried females with partners." Because it is doubtful that any marriages had been performed by a priest on the upper Belize River since 1638, it would not be surprising that 80 couples (160 individuals) out of a total of 256 men and women had not had the sacrament of marriage. It must be emphasized, however, that this may not be the correct interpretation of the contrasting forms found in the census. An alternative interpretation would be that the census taker simply tired of recording in the xHx form and switched in midstream to a less formal method. My decision to include all widows and widowers in a single category, even though 3 widowers were listed in the xHx format, is an arbitrary one.

Scholes and Thompson counted a total of 92 surnames in the matrícula, excluding those of the indios del monte. Of these all but 15 were recorded in Roys's lists of personal names in Yucatan, confirming evidence that the population of Tipu was heavily northern Yucatecan in origin.⁴⁴ Only two couples had the same surname. This large number of surnames among the non-indios-del-monte population (92 out of an adult population of 308) indicates that, on the average, each name was represented by only 3.35 persons. This is, then, a remarkably diverse population with almost no intermarriage at all. We would expect such a situation in a highly mobile population with a high rate of immigration and emigration—which is, of course, precisely the condition that characterized the Tipu region throughout most of its history.

By far the greater part of this population (seventy-one percent) was recorded in the listing for Tipu. Only one of the individuals—Juan Couoh of Lamanai—was not identified as a Tipuan.⁴⁵ What, then, was the identity of the remaining individuals who were assigned to the nine other

towns and those who were indios del monte? My reading of the census is that those from the other towns were among the individuals who had been relocated by rebel leaders from their original mission towns to the vicinity of Tipu beginning about 1639. The indios del monte, on the other hand, were an "unconquered" population whose settlements had been raided by Tipuans for their women in response to a general surplus of males.

Examining first the counts for the nine towns, it will be noted that the numbers are very small. Zacatan, a coastal town that seems to have been completely abandoned by this time, represented the largest number at 14 men, 13 women, and 10 children. The others were much smaller, with two towns, Soite and Xibun, represented by only one couple:

<i>Town</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Children</i>
Zacatan	14	13	10
Zaczuz	7	6	5
Mayapan	7	5	5
Holpatin	4	4	3
Lucu	2	2	2
Chanlacan	2	2	0
Chinam	1	1	0
Xibun	0	1	0
Soite	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Totals	38	34	25

If in fact a large population of fugitives had once been located around Tipu, there appears to have been little left of this population by 1655. It is possible, of course, that many of them had been left behind in Tipu, but the small numbers contrast markedly with the sizable contingent who claimed to be original Tipuans.

Scholes and Thompson discussed the identity of the indios del monte at some length, concluding that they were part of an unconquered Yucatec-related group known as "Muzules," who appear to have occupied a "band of territory stretching from the middle Belize valley to the Sittee River."⁴⁶ There is little doubt that the 4 men and 26 women who were recorded in this category represented a group of Mayas who had never lived under Spanish control and who were, therefore, truly indios del monte as opposed to runaways, fugitives, or apostates. The most unusual characteristics of this population were that about sixty percent of the individuals had day names—which were totally absent in the rest of

the matrícula; that "all [with one exception] had double-barrelled names; all lack baptismal names; nearly all names of women carry the female ~~prefix ix~~, and one of the four names of men has the masculine prefix ah"⁴⁷

No less surprising is that all but four of the indios del monte were women and that there were only two couples among the group. Scholes and Thompson surmised that this meant they had been rounded up "by a detachment of Pérez's force while the men were out hunting or elsewhere engaged and the children had been left behind with the infirm and aged. In that case their homes would have been in the vicinity of Chunukum, presumably south of the Belize River."⁴⁸ Scholes and Thompson were correct in noting that Pérez's comment that he had left these people "populated with the rest of the Indians in the town of Tipu" could hardly have been true, as Pérez never set foot in that town. I believe it is more likely that they were brought with the Tipuans to be counted at Chunukum. Each individual among this group was specifically identified as being from Tipu itself, in contrast to those listed under the nine towns, who were identified by their town of origin. They had probably been captured by the Tipuans themselves and incorporated into the Tipu population as servants, the women also filling the shortage of potential spouses available to the men of Tipu.

An examination of Table 8.1 demonstrates that among the Tipuans there were 41 unattached adult males (16 single males and 25 widowers) in contrast to only 3 unattached adult females (1 single female and 2 widows). Among the other towns the contrast was much less marked: 9 unattached adult males (5 of whom were widowers) and 5 unattached adult females (none of whom were widows). Although it might be argued that most of the single females, particularly the widows, had been left behind, this would seem unlikely in light of the fact that so many married women made the trip with their husbands and children. It is more likely that the imbalance was a real one and that Tipu vigorously sought to increase the number of females through capture of the non-Christianized population.

It is not surprising that there should have been a surplus of males in the upper Belize River towns. Men were much more likely to run away from the mission towns than were women, as the principal pressure for payment of tribute and repartimientos fell upon them. We saw a similar pattern in the Pimienta region in 1622, and the Spanish documents of the period often decry the abandonment of homes by males who sought refuge in the forest. In the Bacalar case we may also assume that women

TABLE 8.1. The Matrícula of Chunukum by Sex, Marriage Status, and Town of Origin

Sex and Marriage Status	Tipu	Towns of Origin							Totals		
		Zaczuz	Zacatan	Holpatin	Chan-lacan	Maya-pan	Chinam	Soite/Xibun		Indios/Monte	Lucu
Married males	53										53
Unmarried males with partners	48	6	9	4	2	4	1	1	3	2	80
Single males	16		3			1			1		21
Widowers	25	1	2			2					30
Total adult males	142	7	14	4	2	7	1	1	4	2	184
Married females	43										43
Unmarried females with partners	48	6	9	4	2	4	1	1	3	2	80
Single females	1		4			1			23		29
Widows	2										2
Total adult females	94	6	13	4	2	5	1	1	26	2	154
Total children	78	5	10	3		5				2	103
Total matriculated	314	18	37	11	4	17	2	2	30	6	441

Sources: AGL, México 158, Méritos y servicios del Capitán Francisco Pérez, vecino de la villa de Salamanca de Bacalar, 1655; Scholes and Thompson, "The Francisco Pérez Probanza," pp. 54-67.

were more easily rounded up in the Spanish reductions and taken back to towns nearer the villa. A common Spanish tactic to induce men to join these reduction communities was to notify husbands that their wives were being held hostage in the towns or at San Juan Extramuros.

The Chunukum matrícula, then, provides a glimpse into some of the dynamics of the upper Belize River population nearly twenty years after the resistance movement had begun. However inaccurate it might be as a census, it provides confirmation of the resettlement of former mission-town inhabitants in this remote region, of the diverse composition of the population, and of the sexual imbalances created by the circumstances of flight and rebellion.

Pérez's Last Visit to Chunukum, April 1656

On his way back to Bacalar Pérez became ill at Hautila, eight leagues from Bacalar. He sent captain Juan Martín de los Cedros for the priest to confess him and administer the last rites. Martín returned with the priest, and the Indians carried Pérez back in a hammock.

A single certification by Lic. Pedro Juan Fernández, the secular priest of Bacalar, reported that he, Pérez, and some Maya carriers left Bacalar again on 25 April 1656 in order to pursue the administration and reduction of the Tipuans. Before leaving, Pérez had sent two Indians on ahead of their party to notify the Tipuans that they were on their way and that they should come down from the upriver towns, apparently to Chunukum, to meet them, bringing what was necessary to sustain the Spaniards while they were there. During this visit Fernández carried out the ecclesiastical responsibilities of the "reduction," as there had been no priest on the earlier entrada to Chunukum. Pérez appointed caciques and other town officers according to the governor's orders. The Tipuans, it was reported, were completely cooperative on this mission.

The mere fact of the cooperation of the Tipuan leadership in the completion of the census, the appointments to the town council, and the missionization activities indicates that the rebellion had lost some of its steam by the end of 1655. We can nonetheless doubt that Pérez had the degree of cooperation that he claimed, and it remained the case that the Spanish were not allowed to visit Tipu itself. The Tipuans lost none of their independence in agreeing to be counted, and some of them may have welcomed the opportunity to partake once more of the sacraments. Their visit to Chunukum—a momentary step back into the colonial world—was a symbol of their continuing identity as people of Yucatan. Tipuans were never to give up their previous identity or to join completely the pagan opposition at Tah Itza.

Pérez hardly accomplished what the governor had expected of him, however. It is doubtful that he or anyone else from Bacalar-Pacha returned after 1656 to administer this region, nor could they have gained much in so doing. The dangers were still great for individual traders and priests, and Pacha was too far away to make the journey a profitable one. Even while being counted, the Mayas of Dzuluinicob could anticipate a few more years of independence from colonial control.

9: IMPENDING KATUN 8 AHAU



Well, tell that captain that I shall receive him willingly. And I promise to surrender myself at his feet with eighty thousand Indians who are my vassals and subjects; and that with a thousand affections I and all my vassals will receive the water of baptism.¹

As the seventeenth century drew to a close, Tipu, La Pimienta, and the other frontier Maya populations found themselves unable to struggle against colonial forces that were newly determined to conquer the populations of the central Peten. In contrast to their resistant stance of earlier years, many frontier Mayas demonstrated a nearly passive acceptance of determined, well-organized, and destructive military forces that were now clearly beyond their control to resist. Reinforcing their sense of helplessness in the face of new armed reductions were rumors and reports that Can Ek himself was prepared to accept missionaries at Tah Itza and his own political incorporation into the colonial empire.

Despite prophecies circulated among the frontier populations in 1668 and 1678 that were designed to stimulate continuing resistance, the imminence of Katun 8 Ahau in 1696 or 1697 seemed to wear down the hopes of most Mayas for a continuing epoch of independence.² As Spanish troops began a series of incursions toward the Peten from Yucatan in 1687, reaching a climax through three separate entradas from Guatemala in 1695 and two from Yucatan in 1695 and 1696, many fugitive and independent Mayas appear to have seen the handwriting on the wall. Disorganized and demoralized, they knew that neither their arms nor their political will could match the inevitability of what was to come.

This chapter, then, concludes an era that had lasted for a century and a half. It is, nonetheless, but a minor and incomplete prelude to a recounting of one of the most important conquests of a New World native population—as only one geographical corner and only a fraction of the political complexity of the remarkable Itza conquest can be detailed here. Tipu, Pimienta, and the rest of the southeastern frontier were only

footnotes to the destruction of the last great Maya stronghold of independence, but like good notes to any larger study, documentation of their minor role can reveal new perspectives on a larger, more spectacular set of events.

THE RETURN OF SIERRA FUGITIVES FROM LA PIMIENTA, 1663

Following the Sacalum massacre of 1624, the Pimienta region faded into obscurity in the official record. Over the following decades, however, inhabitants of the Sierra and other regions of Yucatan continued to drift away into the southeastern forests, making new lives for themselves and their families. In 1663 a small party of runaways from Oxkutzcab and several other Sierra towns, encouraged by a Maya wax trader who was making his rounds among the fugitive settlements around La Pimienta, decided to return to their homes. The documentation of this small drama opens yet another window, albeit a clouded one, on the process by which frontier refugee communities came into being and the lives pursued by these fugitives beyond the control of colonial institutions.³

Francisco Uitzil, the Oxkutzcab trader, had entered the Pimienta region bearing mules loaded with axes and machetes, which he intended to trade for beeswax. He had been carrying out such trips for about two years, and on this occasion he had set out as the agent of the cacique of Oxkutzcab, Don Diego de la Cámara. Once in the heart of La Pimienta, sixty-three leagues from Oxkutzcab, he reached a settlement called Banlica, composed of thirty-five men, sixteen women, and eighteen children. During his six days with this group he convinced some of them that they should return with him to Oxkutzcab, claiming that conditions there had improved. In particular, he convinced them that on account of new royal policies neither repartimientos nor payments to the priests were being imposed on the Indians and that, therefore, their safety and economic well-being would be ensured upon their return.

As news of their impending arrival reached Tekax and Oxkutzcab, however, Cámara, the Oxkutzcab cacique, sent out a party of 120 Mayas to apprehend the returning fugitives. He had them bound and thrown into jail, seizing their beeswax balls, cotton cloth, silver coins, and even the hens they had brought in order to establish their new flocks. Although Cámara may well have instructed Uitzil to engineer the return of the fugitives, Uitzil does not appear to have been a knowing party to the apparent deception. Complaints soon reached officials in Mérida, and

an investigation was ordered at once. The official position was that such returning runaways should be greeted with open arms and treated well in compliance with a new royal *cédula*. The extensive testimony taken at Oxkutzcab was designed both to establish the guilt of the cacique and to shed light on the circumstances under which the runaways had decided to leave their homes in the first place.

Several of the returning fugitives were questioned at length, therefore, on the history of their movements and on conditions in the forests of La Pimienta. One of these witnesses, Francisco Icte, a thirty-year-old widower from Oxkutzcab, testified that he had fled Oxkutzcab four years earlier to a subsistence plot eight leagues away. There he encountered another Indian with whom he set off along with his six-year-old son. In four days they reached a settlement called Macanche; from there he went to another village called Alaxakal,⁴ where he ran into Juan Ku of Akil, who had fled his own town a year earlier. Ku persuaded him to go on to La Pimienta Grande, which they reached after walking for six more days. The small party eventually settled down at the town of Banlica, "where they were occupied in planting corn and hunting in order to eat." The settlement of Banlica consisted of fifteen men, eight women and eight children, whose leader was one Francisco Cocom.

Icte testified that

even though they had no one to administer them and say mass and [teach] doctrine, they still remembered God and recited the prayers, but that on holy Thursdays and holy weeks they were not confessed. And the cause of his having fled from his town was that he was charged tribute a second time, having already paid it; and over the payment of the said tribute he was punished. And his wife died at this time, and in order to bury her and to say mass for her he sold all of his clothes, and having no one to watch over him he headed for the forest to make a living, walking for days into the forest, aware that he would be punished [if caught].⁵

Another witness, Hernando Cal, had also fled from Oxkutzcab four years earlier and had been living in the forest ever since. Although not one of the fugitives from La Pimienta, he had been captured by the Maya troops from Oxkutzcab that had apprehended the party traveling with Uitzil. Suffering under repartimiento payments of wax, tributes in cotton cloth, and church contributions, he testified that he had had to sell three horses and his new house. He fled simply because he was unable to pay his outstanding debts and further required payments. Some

of his sons had already fled for similar reasons, and he was left without any family support. Departing with his wife, he encountered one of his sons in the forest; together they travelled for ten leagues, where they also encountered Juan Ku from Akil. Ku told them of a veritable land of milk and honey deep in the forest, where there was plenty of maize, beans, and cotton and no forced labor or punishment. After a year with Ku, where he stayed on to plant his milpa, he and his family travelled twelve leagues further to Sacbecan, where he found two friends—one of them from Mani—who had been living there for twelve years. These men welcomed them with open arms, as they had heard rumors that he had died.

These and other Maya witnesses all portrayed the circumstances that led to their flight as those of desperate poverty due to excessive repartimiento demands, resulting in their inability to pay their tributes and church contributions. Most provided similar details concerning the individualized networks through which they learned of the new life awaiting them in the freedom of the forest—details that are strikingly similar to those reported by Maya runaways who testified before Mirones y Lescano in 1623 (see Chapter 6). Given the circumstances of their testimony, none complained about the religious requirements of the church, but they did openly complain of excessive required church contributions. Apparently willing Christians, some, in fact, were returning to Oxkutzcab in order to have their small children baptized.

These Sierra Mayas, seeking to return to their families and friends, were the “ordinary” people of the frontier. Hardly rebels, they simply sought to make a living independent of imposed economic and political stresses. On the frontier they could produce the wax that was still in demand by local caciques in the Sierra for sale to Spaniards who engaged in export to New Spain, and they could trade this product and the simple cotton cloth that they produced for the basic “manufactured” goods (such as metal tools, soap, and salt) that they needed for daily survival. Such was probably the case with nearly all of the late seventeenth-century frontier Mayas, despite their continuing reputation in Mérida as dangerous apostates and idolaters.

“The will to sustain us,” to recall that Maya phrase of 1624, was a message signifying the desire to defend this independent way of life. From the Spanish perspective, however, a runaway Indian was just one fewer human contribution to the fragile tributary economy of the peninsula. With thousands of such runaways occupying the southern frontiers, supported in unknown ways by thousands more independent Mayas around Lake Peten Itza, the danger to the colony’s economy and

political structure could not be tolerated forever. Over the years that followed the voluntary return of the Sierra refugees, successive colonial governments of Yucatan gradually constructed plans to destroy the frontier itself. By 1678, as described in the following section, these designs were already well under way.

NEW REDUCTIONS AT TIPU, 1678

In 1668 rebellions broke out in the region of Sahcabchen, south of Chanpoton. The altercations were widespread, involving massive population movements from throughout the peninsula toward the Sahcabchen and neighboring Cehach regions; a series of independence movements with strong overtones of native religious fervor and prophetic discourse; and open opposition to the repartimiento policies of Governor Rodrigo Flores Aldana, whom Farriss has described as one of the most corrupt and greedy governors in the colonial history of Yucatan.⁶

During these resistance movements and throughout the next decade Tipu and the other towns of the old Bacalar province apparently remained in quiet obscurity, freed as they now were from any political controls by the colonial government. But in 1678 anti-Spanish activities broke out anew at the Maya town of Petenacte (or Petenecte) on the Usumacinta River. The inhabitants of Petenacte had killed their encomendero, Captain Bartolomé Lorenzo de Andrade y Arismendi, and fourteen other Spaniards, but the ensuing reductions were aimed at a pacification of a territory far beyond the site of this local problem. As a result, even far-distant Tipu briefly reemerged in the Spanish record during this spate of renewed Spanish determination to put an end to all frontier disturbances.

On this occasion, according to contemporary reports, Governor Antonio de Layseca Alvarado responded to the news of new disturbances at Sahcabchen by sending out an ambitious three-pronged reduction program that was to cover much of the southern frontier from west to east.⁷ Layseca sent Captain Antonio Fernando Tallamendía and Spanish troops, along with the priest Br. Juan de Raya, to the southwestern Franciscan mission of Sahcabchen. This party followed the road from Sahcabchen into the forests, where Raya reportedly baptized and catechized a large number of frontier Mayas. It was the same road, later known as the *camino real* (royal road), along which the troops and missionaries destined for the Itza conquest travelled from 1695 to 1697. A second reduction was pursued through Hopelchen, the same central

frontier hub through which Mirones had begun his entrada to Ixpi-mienta in 1622. The military chief of this entrada, Captain Antonio de Rivera Quentanilla, was accompanied by the missionary Br. Francisco López. The third reduction party, under Sergeant Major Antonio de Ayora Porras and the secular priest Francisco de Bolívar, took the easternmost route through the Bacalar province toward Tipu.

The Hopelchen party under Rivera Quentanilla met disaster after leaving Hopelchen, from which they marched for eight days before reaching the first frontier town of Dzacabku. They found Dzacabku and its environs deserted, but Br. López valiantly walked alone into the forest calling out for the fugitives, whom he eventually contacted. They promised to return peacefully to their towns, but instead a battle ensued between the Spanish troops and about 140 Mayas in which López was wounded by two arrows. Ayora Porras, who received news of the encounter while on his way toward Tipu, reportedly changed his route in order to rescue the Spaniards at Dzacabku.

Apparently, though, Ayora Porras never reached the beleaguered Spaniards at Dzacabku.⁸ After first marching with his troops from Campeche to nearby Uaymax, he had to return to Campeche upon learning that pirates had sacked the port. Heading out once again toward Bacalar, he learned at Teabo that forest Mayas had been seen at Tekax, armed with bows and arrows. He rushed to Tekax, but the intruders had fled upon the news of his approach. From Tekax he and his troops marched to Hopelchen and from there, presumably, on toward Tipu (see below), where they found Chaclol. His party first marched for six days across "hills, swamps, and rivers" until they reached Chaclol, which Ayora Porras claimed was ninety leagues beyond Hopelchen.

Chaclol was the center of about twenty-five towns of fugitive Mayas, all of whom had fled before the arrival of the Spanish troops. These towns the Spanish burned down completely, along with their maize granaries and their subsistence fields, "without leaving them anything." The priest Bolívar baptized many children and some adults at Chaclol, indicating that it, like most of the frontier towns, was made up mainly of recent fugitives from the north. Many of these he first sent to Hopelchen, but they were later removed to Mérida, where their leaders were punished publicly in the city's central plaza.⁹ The captives, along with fugitives captured by the Sahcabchen party, were resettled in the towns of San Antonio Tiz (Tetis) and Chable (Chablekal), near Mérida.¹⁰

At some point during this expedition, presumably in the area of Chaclol:

on account of the news carried by the natives who occupy the towns and province that they call El Tipu, nine principales, ambassadors of the said towns, came to give obedience, placing themselves under the yoke of the royal crown, asking for missionaries that these might administer the holy sacraments.¹¹

The outcome of this renewed contact with Tipu is confused at best, but at some point following the visit of the emissaries, according to a report prepared in defense of Governor Layseca Alvarado:

he [the governor] reduced even the Indians of Tipu, of whom more than six hundred persons of all ages were baptized, who with the old ones had been in a fugitive state without any form of control since the year 1649. And these offered their obedience voluntarily, sending for it their ambassadors, having recognized that they were not invulnerable from the Spaniards on the entrada that they pursued. . . .¹²

This entrada was described in the context of a larger effort in 1680 by the governor to expel pirates and foreign logwood cutters from the area around Laguna de Términos in Tabasco and from the east coast from Cabo Catoche to the Gulf of Honduras. It is by no means clear, however, that the governor intended to link the attacks on pirates and logwood cutters with the activities at Tipu, which were more likely carried out as part of Ayora Porras's 1678 entrada. Because there is neither a record of the establishment of a mission at Tipu following this entrada nor any indication by Ayora Porras that baptisms on such a scale actually took place at Tipu itself, the governor may have partially confused the reductions in and around Chaclol with events at Tipu.

Another possible interpretation of the quoted passage is that Tipu was part of a larger sphere of influence that included Chaclol and that Ayora Porras and part of his party actually did carry out reductions at Tipu in 1678. If this had been the case, some, but certainly not all, of the 600 baptisms would have occurred at Tipu. This interpretation would place Chaclol in the general region of Tipu, a reasonable assumption because of the visit by Tipuan leaders to Ayora Porras while he was presumably at Chaclol. In any event, there is no record of the continued presence of Spaniards in either Tipu or Chaclol during the years immediately following 1678, so the effects of these reductions on the frontier itself must have been minimal. But for Tipuans and their frontier neighbors it must have been evident that their days of absolute independence

from Spanish rule were already numbered. As it had in the past, Tipu played the strategic game of tolerating just enough external contact—this time in the form of actually accepting missionaries in their midst—to stave off military rule and permanent Spanish religious presence. As we shall see, they were able to play this game until Spanish designs on the Itzas drew them into an irreversible encounter with colonial forces that would climax with their role in the Itza conquest and their eventual removal to Lake Peten Itzá in 1707.

PRELUDE TO THE LAST ENTRADA TO LA PIMIENTA

Even while Tipu and the other Yucatec towns of the Bacalar province remained semiautonomous and removed from the Spanish orbit over the succeeding years, the Bacalareños and three Franciscan missionaries from Yucatan turned their attentions to the politically weaker, more pliable Manche Chol towns of southern Belize. Although far from the Itza heartland, events precipitated by the 1684 murder of three friars in the remote Manche Chol town of Paliac led directly to an ambitious entrada into the Pimienta region in 1687. The entrada, pursued by one of the most ambitious men of all Yucatan and his equally determined son, was to lay much of the groundwork for the struggle among Spaniards for control over the Itza conquest itself. The strands connecting these seemingly independent events are tangled and fascinating, casting new light on the complex maneuverings by which Spaniards hoped to gain control over the troublesome frontiers.

The Paliac affair may be traced back in part to the famous 1677 journey by the Dominican friar Joseph Delgado, who, wrote J. E. S. Thompson:

bearing dispatches for the Governor of Yucatan, was sent [from Guatemala] to find an alternative land route, from the Christianized settlements of the Manche Chol via Mopan to Tipu and thence to Bacalar and on to Merida. That would have meant following almost the present-day border between Belize and Guatemala from Gracias a Dios to Garbutt's Falls, perhaps a few miles within Guatemalan territory for most of the distance.

Fr. Delgado set out from Cajabon and finally reached Merida after many tribulations, the chief of which was falling into the hands of English corsairs under the command of the famous Bartholomew Sharpe.

Delgado left four different memoranda of his journey, and it is not easy to reconcile their variations.¹³

At the settlement of one Martín Petz, seven leagues upstream from the mouth of the Yaxal (modern-day Moho) River, Delgado found three Spaniards from either Bacalar or Tihosuco. These men, who had been captured by English pirates and were released somewhere near their present location, informed Delgado that they and other Spaniards from their homeland already knew the Manche Chol region well and that guides and interpreters for the area could be found in Bacalar or Tihosuco.¹⁴ Hardly shaken by their encounter with the pirates, the Spaniards were busy buying cacao from the villagers of the area.¹⁵ From Petz's rancho Delgado and the three Spaniards continued northward to the banks of the Belize (Tipu) River, but they were not permitted to enter the town of Tipu itself.

From his brief encounter among the Manche Chol, Delgado's observations indicate that the Bacalareños had shifted their search for marketable cacao economy from the now inaccessible upper Belize River to the Manche Chol area, situated far to the south of Tipu. But while in 1677 Delgado reported no local opposition to the Spanish trading practices that had so alienated the Yucatec towns of Belize, by 1684 this situation had apparently changed.

On 8–9 November of the latter year Francisco de Hariza Arruyo, who held the position of regidor of Bacalar, then located at Chunhuhub, took testimonies from four individuals with firsthand knowledge of the murder of three Franciscans who had been working in the Manche Chol towns of southern Belize.¹⁶ The principal witness was Diego Martín, a Bacalar Spaniard who reported that he and a party of Bacalareños had accompanied the three Franciscans as far as Paliac, which was probably on the Río Grande.¹⁷ Leaving the missionaries alone in Paliac, the Spaniards went off for about a week to search for food supplies for the missionaries in Yaxal (probably Martín Petz's town visited earlier by Delgado) about eight leagues away and in another town called Misit. At Misit they were attacked while sleeping in their hammocks by a group of ten Indians who seriously wounded Martín's son-in-law, Francisco Nuñez. Martín managed to kill one of the attackers with his musket, and the party immediately headed back to Yaxal.

They found Paliac deserted and the houses and church burned, leading them to the conclusion that the friars had been killed. The surviving Spaniards learned that a party of thirty Indians were on their way to kill

them as well, but they managed to hide in the bush for thirty days with the help of friendly local inhabitants. Eventually, learning with certainty of the death of the friars, they left for Bacalar with several of their Manche Chol allies. These confirmed Martín's testimony, to which they added telling information.

One of these witnesses, Pablo Xul (a native of Hocaba who had accompanied the Spaniards from Bacalar), reported hearing the murders had been carried out because Joseph Delgado of Bacalar had whipped one of the rebels' "kings." This information was confirmed by Agustín Cholat, the alcalde of Yaxal, who stated that Delgado and three other men—presumably Bacalareños as well—had been killed at a village called Has, about thirty leagues from Paliac. From there the rebels proceeded to Paliac, where they killed the friars, and then to Misit, where they attacked Martín and Nuñez.

A later document, prepared by the secular clergy in Mérida, also placed the blame for the tragedy at Paliac directly on Delgado's behavior:

And for the entradas that are claimed to be pursued constantly [by the Franciscans], the only one that has been heard of was that which the Father Fray Marcos de Muros and two other religious tried to carry out. Fourteen Indians killed these in a milpa (according to knowledge provided by the testimony of the Tipu Indians) because they had taken along with them a mulatto named Joseph Delgado, with whom the Indians were quite peeved, as a result of which, although the pretext was holy enough, they did not achieve the intended goal of exalting the holy faith nor of teaching.¹⁸

Although the details are not provided, we may assume that Delgado's assigned task had been to extort as much cacao as possible from the native population, flogging the leaders into submission if necessary. Such had been the practice of the Bacalareños for at least a century, costing them an entire province half a century earlier. This time they paid with their own lives and with those of the regular clergy.

THE PIMIENTA-CHANCHANHA ENTRADA, 1687

Two years later, following the receipt of a royal cédula authorizing the reduction of the Paliac Indians, Governor Bruno Tello y Guzmán articulated an official policy of "revenge" for the Paliac murders. The governor issued an order on 17 August 1686 requiring Captain Juan del

Castillo y Toledo, at the governor's expense, "to penetrate the forest road in order to punish the Indians living there who were guilty in the murder of the religious that took place in 1684."¹⁹ Ironically, however, this ambitious undertaking never attempted to contact the Manche Chol area where the Paliac murders had taken place. Rather, Castillo y Toledo and his son of the same name (but later known as Juan del Castillo y Arrúe) followed in the footsteps of Mirones y Lezcano's entrada over sixty years earlier, focusing their energies on the pacification of the Pimienta region.²⁰ And like Mirones, who with his entire party lost their lives in the process, Castillo y Toledo's underlying aim turned out to have been to open a road to Tah Itza, along which he would be able to pursue the final conquest of the Itzas and to receive the fame and reward that such a success would grant him.

A wealthy Spanish-born resident of Yucatan, where he had lived since about 1664, Castillo y Toledo already had a local record of unpaid military service when he was recruited to avenge the Paliac murders.²¹ He had served in 1683 for five months as infantry *alférez* of a militia company charged with guarding the city from enemy attacks, an appointment based on his prior personally funded military services to the province. In 1684, while living in Mani, he was appointed Captain of the Sierra, with duties that included recruiting and supervising militia soldiers at Mérida for more than seven months. Finally, in 1685, on the eve of the new entrada, his troops (composed of 210 Spaniards and 150 Mayas) resisted an invasion of the eastern towns of Tela and Tihosuco that had threatened Valladolid itself.

Confusion concerning the precise goals of the entrada appears to have been introduced at the outset in Governor Tello y Guzmán's detailed instructions to Castillo y Toledo.²² Although he charged Castillo with locating Paliac and apprehending the murderers, he assumed that Paliac would be along a route that would have provided direct access to Guatemala. Anxious to establish better commercial relations with Guatemala, the governor saw Castillo's larger task—beyond pacifying and reducing the frontier Maya communities along the way—as exploring the possibility of opening a direct road to the neighboring audiencia. In fact, once having taken care of the Paliac affair, Castillo was to visit the president of the Guatemalan audiencia in order to discuss the issue of overland commercial relations. Nowhere in his instructions, however, did the governor mention the question of the pacification of the Peten or the reestablishment of contact with Tipu or other upper Belize River towns.

In fact, an overland route through Paliac on to Verapaz, which would have been the outcome of the governor's instructions, would have been

highly impractical. We may presume that the idea for it was in response to the greatly heightened threat of piracy along the eastern coasts and that an inland route would have been regarded as a safer alternative to normal shipping. So difficult would have been the construction of a road through Pimienta on to southern Belize and Verapaz, however, that Castillo's assigned task was doomed from the outset. It is likely that Castillo knew of these difficulties all along and that he saw the venture as an opportunity for immediate enrichment through the establishment of reduction communities that he could claim as an *encomienda*. Furthermore, the successful reduction of communities in the Pimienta region would provide him with future ammunition in a claim for control over the long-anticipated overland conquest of the Itzas. Even before the collapse of the long-ineffective villa of Salamanca de Bacalar, La Pimienta, after all, had long been viewed as the principal hindrance to the construction of a string of pacified communities that would connect Hopelchen with Tipu, a town still viewed by some as the obvious contact point from which the Itza conquest could best be pursued.

Castillo y Toledo, who bore the title Captain, recruited his troops from his base in the Sierra; the review was carried out in Oxkutzcab on 8 November 1686.²³ He and his son, who was designated Captain General, were in command of 129 Spaniards and 141 Mayas, with a total force of 272 men. The Maya troops comprised a company of 58 men from Oxkutzcab and one of 62 men from Tekax; in addition, 21 individuals designated as "hidalgos" were attached to the Maya forces. Each of the Maya companies was led by a native captain, *alférez*, sergeant, assistant, and two squadron corporals.

The Franciscan provincial intended to supply the *entrada* with three friars, but only two actually accompanied the troops. Fray Francisco Centurion, an older man from the Canary Islands, served as the *comisario* of the mission. He was assisted by Fray Sebastian Méndez.²⁴ Castillo y Toledo's patron saint for the journey was the Virgen del Rosario.

By 20 November the Castillos claimed expenditures for salaries and supplies totalling 3,073 pesos, 3 reales.²⁵ Only nineteen of the Spanish soldiers received payment for their services, and no funds were designated for the Maya troops, who apparently received only subsistence. The troops must have departed from Oxkutzcab in January or early February 1687, and by 1 March Castillo y Toledo was able to report his first successes.²⁶

By that date they had travelled 130 leagues into the forest, "opening roads and cutting bush." They first reached a town called Holpat:

whose inhabitants lacked any knowledge of our holy faith or any contact with the other Indian subjects of his majesty (whom God may protect), on account of which as soon as they had heard of my arrival they not only burned their houses, abandoning their town, but also ran away into the forests.²⁷

His troops managed to round up the runaways, congregating them at the spot of their original town, where a church was constructed. Castillo y Toledo named Don Antonio Piste as cacique of the new reduction, and the friars busied themselves baptizing, catechizing, and counting the population. By 18 March a matrícula of 273 males and females of all ages had been prepared.²⁸ From the certification of this matrícula it is clear, notwithstanding the captain's claims, that a significant portion of the adult population had been baptized before. The inhabitants of Holpat as well as those of the towns that were subsequently reduced were obviously runaways from the north, not uncontacted native populations.

Over the next month eight additional "towns" were established and treated to the same procedures that had been followed in Holpat. These towns, the names of their newly appointed caciques, and the counted populations are summarized, according to information provided by Castillo y Toledo, in Table 9.1. The number of persons matriculated—which includes both sexes and all ages—totals 1,666.²⁹ The nine resulting communities were reduced from a total of twenty-seven villages and hamlets. All nine now had churches and, if the governor's instructions had been followed correctly, "crosses in the entrances of the towns"³⁰—a custom still practiced throughout this region and much of the rest of the peninsula.

Castillo y Toledo later wrote that they had travelled southward for more than 100 leagues before taking prisoner some apostate runaways and some Mayas who had been born in the forest. From these

I acquired information not only of their populations but also of others located ahead along the route I was following as well as toward the southeast. On this basis, going toward those who were to the south I managed to encounter them, although fruitlessly, because upon the news of my arrival the inhabitants set fire to [their houses] and provisions, thereby making their escape, [supposing] that my people and I would not return for them. And notwithstanding what had happened . . . I continued with the enterprise in order to achieve the reduction of the said Indians. . . . And leading my marches toward the southeast, I went on to look for the populations in that direction, and at the cost of

TABLE 9.1. La Pimienta Towns Reduced by Juan del Castillo y Toledo, 1687, with Caciques and Summary Population Data

<i>Name of Town</i>	<i>Cacique</i>	<i>Matriculated Population</i>	<i>Date of Matrícula, 1687</i>
S. Juan Bautista Holpat	Don Antonio Piste	273	18 March
Chuncuy	Don Alonso Chi	202	23 March
Haxchay	Don Pedro Tun	227	30 March
Sta. Clara Chanchanha	Don Antonio Ku	173	10 April
Ichuitzil	None named	232	16 April
Sibes	None named	57	17 April
La Pimienta	Don Jacinto Ku	90	18 April
Chekanchi/Chiquincha (La Pimienta)	Don Pablo Chi	281	27 April
Chekbul de la Candelaria	Don Mateo Balam	131	28 April

Source: AGI, México 920, Certifications of the reductions and matrículas of the towns of Holpat et al., March–April, 1687, in Méritos y servicios de Juan del Castillo y Toledo y Juan Castillo y Arrúe, 1717, f. 1085v–96r.

much labor I managed to reach them, finding that they had already burned their houses and provisions and that their inhabitants had retreated to the forests.

These too, of course, he managed to reduce. He attributed part of his success to the cooperation of prisoners whom he took from the towns along the way, who were to convince those of the towns ahead to submit peacefully. He claimed to have treated them well, providing them with gifts and allowing them to walk freely.

Such vague geographical descriptions, however, provide insufficient detail to reconstruct the location of most of these towns. Fortunately, we do know the precise location of Santa Clara Chanchanha, which the reports agree was at the center point of the missions.³¹ Fray Bernardino de Espejo, who carried out a visita to all nine towns, stated that after traveling for sixty leagues from the “last [town] of this province” one reached the first of the forest towns, Santa Rosa de la Pimienta. The last of them, he said, was nearly thirty leagues from Santa Rosa—in an unspecified direction.³²

At first glance this information is confusing, because while Santa Rosa de la Pimienta was one of the last-formed reductions (founded at

least a month after Holpat), it was the first of those situated along the road followed by Espejo. The confusion can be partially resolved by assuming that Castillo y Toledo actually did travel directly south from Oxkutzcab before encountering Holpat and later turning toward the east, a change in route that he described as "marching toward the southeast." This refers to the southeastern portion of the peninsula rather than to the direction of the route from his initial position.

From Holpat, which was probably situated somewhere to the west or southwest of Chanchanha, the entrada, then, would have turned eastward, passing through Chuncuy and Haxchay before reaching Chanchanha. From Chanchanha, as we shall see, it fanned outward to the neighboring regions that included the core of the Pimienta region at Tzucpimienta, which in Chapter 6 was suggested as being the location of the town of Ixpimienta that was reached by Mirones in 1622. It is logical that Ixpimienta would have survived following the Sacalum massacre of 1624 and that it, Pimienta Grande of 1663, and La Pimienta of 1687 were one and the same.

A close examination of the matrícula certifications and attached brief progress reports by Castillo y Toledo reveals that there were actually fewer than nine reduction settlements. This number may have reflected the number of churches constructed, but some of the reduced towns, including La Pimienta, were only barrios of a larger community at Chanchancha. Each of the first three towns—San Juan Bautista Holpat, Chuncuy, and Haxchay—appears to have been physically separated and independent from the others. Santa Clara Chanchancha, however, seems to have been the site for the congregation of all but one of the other communities.

The clearest indication of Chanchancha's status as a "multi-town" community appears in a certification by Castillo y Toledo's *alférez* Francisco de Navarrete, who had been left in charge of the "reducto [fortification] del Rosario y pueblo de Santa Clara de Chanchancha."³³ Clearly, then, El Rosario and Chanchanha were the same community; this is further confirmed by Castillo y Toledo's practice of referring to El Rosario as the real (military headquarters), while referring to Santa Clara de Chanchancha as the principal town associated with the military post.³⁴

It appears that once Castillo y Toledo was established in Chanchancha-El Rosario, he ordered his men to bring in people from outlying communities at considerable distance to settle in and around the town. He reported the resettlement of the first two from "the town of El Rosario" (alias Chanchancha). The first group was composed of inhabitants from the villages ("parajes") of Ichuitzil,³⁵ Xiquinchah, Kakalha,

and Tulum; these were known collectively as Ichuitzil after the first of these towns. The second group was from "the two parajes called Sibes."³⁶ Although Castillo y Toledo reported that the inhabitants of Sibes had appointed a cacique, he mentioned no caciques' names for either Ichuitzil or Sibes—suggesting that at first both were under the control of Antonio Ku, the cacique of Chanchancha.

Still writing from El Rosario, he then reported that he had settled the Indians who inhabit "the paraje called La Pimienta, that from now on has as its patron Nuestra Señora del Rosario and will in the future be called the town of El Rosario." Clearly La Pimienta had also been incorporated into Chanchancha, taking its avocation from that of the *reducto*. Then, with an even cleverer twist of the quill, he reported next from "the town and real of Santa Rosa de la Pimienta" (*alias* El Rosario, *alias* Chanchancha) that the inhabitants of the villages of Chekanchi and Chiquinchah had also been settled at "Santa Rosa de la Pimienta." Perhaps only to confuse his readers further, he noted that this La Pimienta "is to the east of the abandoned settlement of Halaltun"—a community mentioned nowhere else in the document.³⁷

Finally, in a grand climax to the multiplication of place names for a single town, he reported from "the town and real of Santa Rosa de Bitervo de la Pimienta" that he had reduced and settled the inhabitants of Chekbul, designating Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria as their patron. In this case, however, his text makes it quite clear that the people of Chekbul were allowed to remain in their community rather than being resettled at Chanchancha.

In a report prepared upon his return to Mérida, probably in May of 1687, Castillo y Toledo stated that he had left a wood fortification in an open area in the middle of the reduced towns. The fort was guarded by twenty men under the *alférez* Francisco de Navarrete.³⁸ From the preceding analysis it appears that this fortification or *reducto* was surrounded by the inhabitants of Chanchancha, Ichuitzil and its related villages, Sibes, La Pimienta, Chekenchi, and Chiquinchah—a total of 833 men, women, and children. We cannot know how compact this settlement might have been, but it is most likely that it was divided into separate barrios, each with a separate thatched church and its own cacique.

The record provides no indication that the inhabitants of Holpat, Chuncuy, Haxchay, and Chekbul were also brought to this central guarded community. Each of these towns seem to have been left in its original location.

The Castillo y Toledo entrada resulted, therefore, in the formation of five rather than nine physical communities. The Spanish desire to cen-

tralize dispersed communities had by no means weakened by the end of the seventeenth century, nor had the overall strategy of congregation changed significantly from the sixteenth century. This case was unusual, however, in that multiple communities at a single location were required to keep their own *república* organizations of *caciques*, *alcaldes*, and other community leaders. The intention in encouraging such a practice was probably to avoid centralization of native power in a single large community of nearly a thousand souls. Castillo y Toledo must have been well aware of the disaster that had befallen Mirones y Lezcano in the same region in 1624, and he was determined to establish structures that would discourage a similar unified native resistance.

Such a disaster, nonetheless, may have been in the making by 1690, when the *alférez* at Chanchancha, Juan de Figueroa, reported a plot to kill the friars and soldiers who were stationed there (as summarized by Governor Juan Joseph de la Barcena):

he found that certain *principales* had been in communication with a group of Indians who arrived at the said Chanchancha and [that] an *alcalde* named Fernando Chan had them hidden in his house; and that they stated and confessed that these were ten Indians who came to plot the murder of the friars and all the Spaniards who resided in the said towns, as well as all of the Indians who were associated with the said Spaniards. They also declared that the then *alcalde* Fernando Chan, [his] lieutenant Juan Couoh, the present *procurador* Antonio Zab, and the present *alcalde* Pablo Cox had plotted with the said Indians [that they would] return within twenty days with all their companions to kill all of the aforesaid.³⁹

Figueroa was not certain who these visitors were but supposed that they might be Cehaches, Mopans, or a group called Eleles, all of whom were located on the "route toward Guatemala." Having only six soldiers and one friar who could seek them out, he asked the governor for reinforcements. The governor ordered that Juan del Castillo y Toledo send twenty of his Sierra troops to "reduce" the culprits, specifying that he "pacify those of those towns without carrying out a new conquest" so that what had already been gained would not be lost. The *alcalde* Fernando Chan, who was already held prisoner at Chanchancha, was to be sent back to Mani, where Castillo y Toledo resided.

The outcome of this new reduction is unknown, but it is clear that the threatened attack never materialized. The fears of a wider rebellion, however, were in recognition of the existence of the supposedly rebel-

lious frontier populations to the south of Chanchanha. These were the populations toward Tipu and beyond, in the very direction of the Manche Chols whom Castillo y Toledo had failed to contact—as he had been instructed to do—during his 1687 entrada.

In an earlier report on his modest and incomplete successes, Castillo y Toledo had claimed that he had completed the bulk of his assigned task by opening part of a road toward Guatemala and by establishing the groundwork “for the reduction of the rest of the barbarous Indians of Tipu, Taiza, Cehach, and others who inhabit the said forest.”⁴⁰ Castillo y Toledo’s aims had clearly been to set the stage for his own role in the Itza conquest, which he would pursue along a road from Chanchanha to Tipu, and from there to Tah Itza. He never intended to arrest the perpetrators of the Paliac murders, as the Manche Chol rebels were of no importance to his wider aims.

In 1696, while Governor Ursúa y Arismendi was opening the camino real that was to connect Mérida directly with Peten Itza along a north-south axis, bypassing the route through Chanchanha and Tipu, Castillo y Toledo complained bitterly that all of his efforts had been ignored and that his personal expenses and energies had been for nought.⁴¹ Even at this late date, when, as we shall shortly see, it was apparent that all efforts to mount the conquest through Tipu had failed, he once again attempted to make the case for his original plan of attack. He claimed that the Tipuans “and other nations that exist between the two provinces [of Yucatan and Guatemala]” were friendly with those of Chanchanha. Apparently referring to Tipu’s participation in the Itza delegation to Mérida in 1695 and their subsequent acceptance of missionaries, he emphasized that the Tipuans were well disposed to the Spanish system of government. These circumstances, along with obligations that he claimed he bore under the weight of several cédulas, had reinforced his decision to maintain the strength and viability of the Chanchanha area reductions. He was still ready and willing to carry out the Tipu-based Itza conquest, despite the progress being made on other fronts.⁴²

But the die had already been cast in Ursúa’s favor, and Castillo’s plan was shelved. Chanchanha and the other missions reduced in 1687 were to remain isolated, without their intended role in the wider schemes of the day. According to Castillo y Toledo, his son had been granted these towns in encomienda by Governor Tello y Guzmán with the stipulation that no tributes would be collected for the first two years and that from the income three of the soldiers who participated in the reduction (Alférezes Francisco de Navarrete and Antonio Martín Negrón and Sergeant

Diego Cabañas) would receive stipends. Nine years later Castillo y Toledo claimed that no tributes had ever been paid.⁴³ These claims regarding tributes, however, were untruths. On 16 June 1687, only a few weeks after the establishment of the new towns, Governor Tello y Guzmán authorized tribute payments by the towns, totaling fifty-five mantas, to each of the three named soldiers.⁴⁴ While the Castillos were not personally enriched by the frontier Mayas, the newly reduced populations were required, as was the custom, to underwrite their own conquest.

TIPU AND THE ITZA DELEGATION TO MERIDA

On 7 July 1695 Captain Francisco de Hariza y Arruyo, by then serving as alcalde of Bacalar at Chunhuhub, wrote to Governor Ursúa from Zaczuz in reply to orders that he assist a boatman who would go to the Belize River towns in a *piragua* and canoes.⁴⁵ It is evident from later records that he had reached as far as Tipu.⁴⁶ He had taken at least one priest with him, who had baptized "more than a hundred persons large and small."⁴⁷ Seven of these were leaders over seventy years of age from "a nation called Muzul"; these "have not heard of Christianity [before now]" but were taught to recite Christian prayers.

Knowing that the "towns of Tipu" communicated regularly with Tah Itza, Hariza had sent a Maya ambassador named Mateo Uicab to Can Ek with a gift of a machete and a letter, both from Ursúa. This letter, like those of earlier years, once again enjoined the Itza leaders to succumb peacefully to Spanish rule on the promise of good treatment. Optimistic and anxious to please the governor, he wrote of his hope that "in time your lordship must sign the elections of the Indians of Tah Itza island."

Hariza apparently waited at Tipu in vain until late August for Uicab's return. Hearing no word he sent off seven Tipuans to Mérida "to render [their] obedience, requesting that their elections be confirmed and [that they be provided with] priests. . . ." The Tipuan leaders, in customary fashion, brought Ursúa examples of the clothing that they wore and traded with the Itzas.⁴⁸ Ursúa shortly thereafter succeeded in committing the church administration of Yucatan to provide four secular priests who were to be sent to Tipu in January with a military guard of thirty men.⁴⁹

At the end of October the details of Uicab's visit to Tah Itza emerged in a letter sent from Tipu to Hariza by Pablo Gil de Azamar, another Bacalareño.⁵⁰ Uicab had reported that just before he arrived at Tah Itza the Itzas had prepared three or four thousand men to fight around a

hundred Spaniards who were advancing from Verapaz toward the lake. The Spaniards had encountered about thirty Mayas in sight of the lake, and eventually fighting broke out in which twenty Mayas lost their lives. In a rare account of Maya reactions to such events, Gil wrote that "the said Uicab says that he saw [a Maya prisoner who escaped with his life] wounded by an axe blow and struck in the middle of his head by the butt of a musket. And he later arrived at his town covered with wounds. And because of this the king [Can Ek] was deeply distressed."

This Spanish party was part of an exploratory Guatemalan entrada to Tah Itza led by Captain Juan Díaz de Velasco from Cahabon in Verapaz through Manche Chol and Mopan territory. Díaz's entrada was part of a three-pronged effort designed by Jacinto Barrios Leal, the President of the Audiencia of Guatemala, primarily to conquer the Cholti-speaking Lacandones around Sac Balam in western Peten. Díaz's armed encounters with the Itzas came as a surprise to officials in Yucatan, who had assumed that the Guatemalans would limit their activities to the Lacandon regions. The Dominican friar Agustín Cano, who accompanied Díaz, later wrote a detailed description of these encounters.⁵¹

Uicab managed to convince some, but not all, of the Itzas that he was not responsible for the Spanish intrusion. He claimed that upon announcing his mission to Can Ek, the Itza leader told him (freely translated here):

Well, tell that captain that I shall receive him willingly. And I promise to surrender myself at his feet with eighty thousand Indians who are my vassals and subjects; and that with a thousand affections I and all my vassals will receive the water of baptism. And tell him also that he is not to deceive me in order to kill me, that I promise your governor four thousand Indians for the city of Mérida, as I wish very much to see your king. Tell him also that when he arrives in this town he should send for me to call on him, letting me know by whomever he wishes, and that upon receiving his message I shall go down to see him in order to find out if he really means to be peaceful; because if he comes straightaway to my town I shall make war against him.

From Uicab's report it appears that Ursúa's letter to Can Ek may have contained references to Maya prophecies, as Can Ek told him after hearing Ursúa's letter that

all was true and that the time of the prophecies had already arrived, and that he wished to see our governor disposed to grant him peace,

"because the others," he said, "do not wish to conquer towns, only to kill us. And for that we have made war against them. But that to your governor I shall render vassalage, because my descent is from that province."⁵²

Apparently the troops from Guatemala had frightened the entire Maya countryside into believing that a major Spanish attack from that direction was imminent, as Gil reported that towns around Tipu and throughout the central Peten were rapidly being deserted. Even a group of about a hundred "Couojos," who we know lived north of Lake Peten Itza, had been in search of Hariza, seeking his protection. With "all the forest" depopulated, the population around Tipu had swelled considerably.

Even while these events were taking place, Governor Ursúa was overseeing the construction of a road that would ultimately link Mérida and Campeche with Tah Itza itself. The Guatemalan entrada to Lake Peten Itza was part of a larger plan to connect these roads and thus to establish in a single blow the destruction of Itza hegemony and the fulfillment of the long-desired overland connection between Yucatan and Guatemala.⁵³ Following the Maya-Spanish battle near the shores of the lake, which resulted in a rapid Spanish retreat, the Guatemalans had given up any immediate pretensions of keeping such a road open or of pursuing the Itza conquest themselves. Now solely responsible for encountering the Itzas himself, Ursúa had succeeded in having his soldiers and workers complete the northern road as far as Tzuctok—deep in Cehach territory—by December 1695.⁵⁴

In June 1695 Ursúa had sent the Franciscan Fray Andrés de Avendaño y Loyola along the slowly progressing new road, accompanied by Spanish soldiers. Avendaño's goal was to reach Tah Itza, where he hoped to convince Can Ek that the Itzas should submit peacefully to Spanish rule. Distressed by the behavior of his military escort, however, the friar returned to Mérida in September without having made much progress toward Tah Itza. He set out again in December, this time carrying with him a lengthy letter addressed to Can Ek from Ursúa.⁵⁵ Avendaño knew of the Maya-Spanish battle at the lake earlier that year, but he was convinced that Can Ek would be receptive to arguments that the Mayas' own prophecies now required their submission to the Spanish crown. Despite initial positive overtures by Can Ek, however, Avendaño was ultimately forced out of town by those hostile to Can Ek's growing signs of weakness in the face of impending prophecy.⁵⁶

Avendaño was unaware during his visit at Tah Itza that his host had

reportedly sent several representatives to Mérida to meet with Ursúa and offer his submission to Spain. The extraordinary news of this delegation was first conveyed by Pablo Gil de Azamar in early December 1695. Gil reported that four representatives from Tah Itza, including Can Ek's nephew, had arrived at Bacalar (apparently at the old location of the town).⁵⁷ The nephew, who later turned out to be Ah Chan, subsequently baptized as Martín Francisco Chan, had supposedly brought his uncle's crown as a sign of his homage to the Spanish. They came via Tipu with "some Indians from Mozul" and the two *alcaldes* from Tipu, who served as the Itzas' interpreters. Hariza soon took this party to Bacalar, where they were to remain for about three weeks until the roads dried out and the trip to Mérida would be feasible.⁵⁸

Ah Chan testified after the conquest of Tah Itza that his mother was Can Te, the sister of Can Ek. His father, a native of Tipu, had died from a snakebite. Ah Chan had been living at Yalain, on the east end of Lake Peten Itza, at the time he claimed that Can Ek had sent him to Mérida.⁵⁹ Scholes and Thompson commented in colorful language upon this marriage tie between Tipu and Tah Itza:

Unlike Bertha, wife of pagan Ethelbert of Canterbury, whose Christian religion was guaranteed in her marriage settlement, Can [sic, referring to Ah Chan's father] surely discarded his Christianity upon marriage into heathen "royalty." Apart from the historical romance of this Tipuan abjuring Christianity, which probably sat lightly on him, the prosaic fact that a man of Tipu could marry the sister of the ruler of Tayasal and settle in his territory is evidence of the close bonds between Tipu and the Petén Maya, deeper than commercial relations (Tipu traded machetes and axes for textiles of Tayasal).⁶⁰

The Itza delegation family arrived in Mérida, amidst a spectacular reception, in mid-morning the day after Christmas.⁶¹ Ursúa called together the city's *cabildo* and other military and civil officials, taking them all to meet the Itza visitors at the convent of La Mejorada that was then located outside the entrance to the city in a Maya barrio. A crowd had gathered to witness the event, creating a parade that accompanied the visitors first to the cathedral, where they heard a service, and then to the palace of the governor.

Witnessing the palace reception were the dean and the ecclesiastical *cabildo*; a number of secular priests, Jesuits, and friars from the order of San Juan de Dios;⁶² members of the city *cabildo*; and other persons of importance. The star of the ceremony was Ah Chan himself, who pre-

sented the governor with a crown of colored feathers "in the style of a tiara." He presented a short speech, translated by the official interpreter, a secular priest:

Lord: Representing the person of my uncle the great Ah Can Ek, king and absolute lord of the Itzas, in his name and by his command, I come to prostrate myself at your feet and offer before them his royal crown so that in the name of your great king, whose person you represent, you would receive and admit us into his royal service and under his protection, favor, and patronage, and that you grant us priests who would baptize us and administer and teach the law of the true God. This is that which I have come for and that which my king solicits and desires, supported by the common feeling of all his vassals.

So formulaic, exaggerated, and "Spanish" was this statement that we might conclude that whatever Ah Chan's original words might have been, they were completely transformed by the interpreter. More likely, however, they may have been written for him by Ah Chan's host and new patron, Francisco de Hariza, with the help of the Tipuan interpreters.

Ursúa responded with a brief "acceptance" speech of his own. Two of the Muzul Indians who had accompanied Ah Chan then entered the room, prostrated themselves before the governor, and declared their obedience to the crown "on their own behalf and in the name of all the other Indians of their nation." In an unusual gesture, Ursúa embraced the new Spanish vassals and in an unspecified manner "entertained everyone with demonstrations of happiness."

Ah Chan was later questioned at some length about his people, the political organization of the Itzas and their neighbors, and the circumstances of his visit. In response, he reported that his visit was in large part motivated by Can Ek's recognition of the imminence of the prophecies:

importuning that they drink one and the same water and inhabit one and the same house, because the designated ending from the prophecies of their ancestors had been reached, so that from then on he [Can Ek] and the four kings who obeyed him would render the vasallage owed the king our lord

Can Ek knew of Yucatan, he said, through the Indians of Tipu and through his reading of the sacred books at Tah Itza.

Over the next three days the four emissaries were baptized. Ah Chan was given the name Martín Francisco Chan in honor of the governor.

His younger brother took the name Pedro Miguel Chan. His brother-in-law was baptized Manuel José Chaias, and the fourth member of the party was named Juan Francisco Tek. Two Cehach leaders (Joseph Kumu and Bartolomé Ciyau) and presumably the Muzules were also baptized.⁶³

Subsequent reports cast doubt on the authenticity of Ah Chan's claims to be a genuine representative of Can Ek. These doubts were first mentioned by Avendaño in his report of his reception at the town of Yalain following his expulsion from Tah Itza about 17 January 1696. There, four leagues east of Lake Peten Itza, he discovered a house under construction which, he was told, was intended for Spanish priests who had been requested by four Tipuans who had travelled to Mérida the previous September.⁶⁴ This, obviously, was the same party sent by Hariza from Tipu in August. Avendaño recalled meeting these four men at the Franciscan monastery in Mérida that month, three months before he had left on his journey to Tah Itza. He had understood that Francisco de Hariza of Bacalar had sent a "Spanish servant" (clearly Pablo Gil de Azamar) to accompany them to Mérida.⁶⁵ The people of Yalain inquired after them, apparently unaware that they had by then completed their second journey to Mérida. Together they and the friar agreed that the four individuals were Ah Chan, his younger brother, Ah Chan Tan, Ah Tek, and Ah Ku. Although all four men were identified as Tipuans, it was clear that they were friends of the people of Yalain, whose priest-ruler was Chomax Zulu, "a great comrade and confidant of King Canek. . . ."⁶⁶

At the time of his visit to Yalain, Avendaño, of course, was unaware of the second visit of Ah Chan and his brother (baptized Pedro Miguel) to Mérida at the end of December, as by that time he was already on his way to Tah Itza.⁶⁷ He noted, however, that in 1693 the same group had visited Chanchanha (which in 1696 was abandoned), where they called on Fray Francisco Novelo.⁶⁸ In a later investigation into Ah Chan's claims, Avendaño added that when he met the four "Tipuans" in Mérida they were seeking official confirmation of their elections as town officials. It would thus appear that Ursúa and Hariza, once having seen the symbolic and political potential of Ah Chan's connections with both Tipu and Tah Itza, and having realized the possibility of establishing Yalain as a gateway to the Itzas, decided to recognize Chan as an emissary of Can Ek and to establish Yalain as a legitimate Spanish Indian town. They must have sent Chan and his companions back to Tipu in September with instructions to return in December as a "full-dress" ambassadorial party.

Under this scenario Yalain, of course, would have had both Itza (due to the Chans' relationship to Can Ek) and Spanish (due to their relationship to Tipu) legitimacy. Yalain, Avendaño had stated, was composed of Itzas as well as Tipuans, thus partially explaining why a delegation of "Tipuans" would have been sent from a town so near the lake—and suggesting that relations between Tipu and Can Ek were very close indeed.⁶⁹

Avendaño, however, later testified and wrote that in his conversations with Can Ek, the ruler had never mentioned having sent an ambassador to Mérida, nor had he made mention of his supposed nephew.⁷⁰ The implication, clearly, was that Ah Chan was a fraud. During the same hearing, which was designed by Ursúa's rival (then Governor Roque de Soberanis y Centeno) to discredit the entire Itza project, Fray Gregorio Clareda reported having seen Chan in his cell in Oxlutzcab with three Indian companions, "but in the ordinary, humble dress worn by those of this province. . . ."⁷¹ The implication was clear—how could such ordinary men have been true representatives of the great Itza ruler? Yet another witness, the secular priest Lic. Pedro Mallen de Rueda, spoke of rumors circulating in Peto that Chan was an imposter.⁷²

It is likely, then, that Francisco de Hariza did arrange with Governor Ursúa the elaborate staging of the second visit of the "Itza" ambassadors to Mérida. Ursúa undoubtedly saw a major advantage in publicizing Itza willingness to accept Spanish rule as a means of legitimizing his entire project of conquest and therefore took advantage of the public display of individuals who claimed to have direct authority from Can Ek to issue invitations for Spanish priests and promises of civil obedience. Later documentation, however, established that Martín Chan and his companions were indeed close kinsmen and associates of Can Ek, who apparently sought to utilize their dual identity with Tipu and the Itza-affiliated town of Yalain as a means of seeking a peaceful solution to Spanish designs on Tah Itza itself.⁷³ Although it is possible that Chan exaggerated Can Ek's willingness to capitulate to the Spanish, the Itza ruler's hospitable reception of Avendaño suggests that he was ready to take advantage of any nonmilitary solution to the approaching crisis.

The task of identifying the priests who would accompany Hariza and the Itza delegation back to Tipu and, hopefully, on to Tah Itza itself had already been accomplished before the delegation's arrival. These were nominated at a series of church cabildo meetings, resulting in a list of ten secular clergy, including the priest from Bacalar.⁷⁴ Notwithstanding Franciscan efforts to gain control of this promising mission, they were restricted to the entradas and reductions along the camino real to Tah

Itza, while the Tipu mission remained in the hands of the secular clergy, on the argument that Tipu was part of Bacalar, which had always been a secular mission.⁷⁵

Seven years later, at the bishop's request, the Tipu mission's leader, Br. Gaspar de Güemes, filed a brief report on his memory of this entrada.⁷⁶ Güemes reported that they had set off from Mérida with Martín Chan, the other members of the original Maya party, Francisco de Hariza, and a group of twenty-five or thirty soldiers.⁷⁷ They travelled through Bacalar—presumably the old location—and from there to Tipu and "its annex," a town called Baltok.⁷⁸ He recalled that the inhabitants of these towns paid thirty-five mantas in tribute and that they were mostly baptised, many of them having come from Yucatan. Although their immediate intention was to head directly for Tah Itza, they had second thoughts upon learning that a party of Franciscans, who had recently spent three days at the lake, had been badly treated there by all but Can Ek himself, and that they had had to leave without achieving success. They had learned, of course, of the fate of Fray Andrés de Avendaño y Loyola's unsuccessful mission—and that news was all it took to convince them not to risk their lives by going to Tah Itza. Had the party been Franciscans, who were not afraid of martyrdom, the history of the Itza conquest might have been different. As it was, however, the religious conquest of the Itzas was doomed, and efforts soon turned to a military conquest headed by Ursúa himself.

Güemes recalled that a few days after arriving at Tipu Martín Chan ran away, leaving them stranded without their valued Itza contact.⁷⁹ Hariza concluded that it would be best for them to stay on at Tipu, focusing their efforts on the souls of the Tipuans and the surrounding population.⁸⁰ Within two months Güemes and most of the other priests became ill, and he and seven others left for Mérida, leaving only two healthy ones behind with Hariza and the soldiers.

Hariza's own decision not to enter Tah Itza and take up Can Ek's purported offer to submit to the Spanish crown was, it turned out, well considered. Hariza sent a Tipuan to offer Can Ek a peace gift, but his emissary shortly returned with news of Avendaño's expulsion. He must have learned at the same time of a pitched battle between inhabitants of the lake and a party of armed Spaniards and Mayas sent by Captain Alonso García de Paredes, who had opened the road to within eight or so leagues of Tah Itza. The Spanish party (which consisted of sixty Spanish soldiers, some armed Mayas, Maya bearers, and the Franciscan friar Juan de San Buenaventura and his lay companion) was headed by Captain Pedro de Zubiaur Isasi, who had also been instructed to work out

terms of submission with Can Ek. When they arrived at the lake they were met by hostile Mayas in numerous canoes; about ten Spaniards and about thirty "Itzas" were killed in the ensuing fighting. Fray Juan was last seen being carried off by the Maya enemy, as were several of the Maya carriers and the cacique of Sacabchen. This group had arrived just after Avendaño's forced removal from Tah Itza, leading to the possible conclusion that the Itzas' bad treatment of Avendaño was due to the news of the imminent arrival of armed Spaniards from Yucatan.⁸¹

Safe and sound back at Tipu, Hariza's Maya emissary reported that Can Ek had told him that after Avendaño's arrival

his vassals had risen up and did not wish to admit padres nor Spaniards in their lands, although the king himself wished to so do. He also declared that on the third day after the padres' arrival they decided to kill them. As the king was aware of this, he appointed an Indian of his satisfaction to help them escape, which he did by sending them off in the direction of the said Tipu.⁸²

This report confirms Avendaño's own perceptions that his group's expulsion was caused by Can Ek's enemies, while Can Ek remained friendly to his efforts.

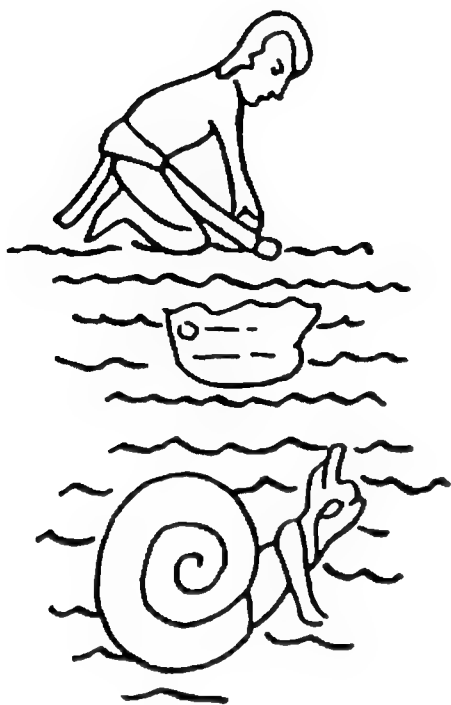
TIPU ON THE EVE OF THE ITZA CONQUEST

Ursúa reported learning from Hariza in April 1696 that twenty-one soldiers still remained at Tipu.⁸³ These had constructed a reducto—or fortification—at the town, just as Castillo y Toledo had built at Chanchanha several years earlier. No evidence for such a structure, which was probably built of wood, has been located at the archaeological site of Tipu.

These soldiers, Hariza stated, had managed to reduce a reported (and probably exaggerated) 500 Mayas from the "nations of Losaquinis and Muzul" to a location two leagues from Tipu itself. Of the Losaquinis we presently know nothing.⁸⁴ The Muzul were probably a Yucatec-speaking group centered at the town of Zauí, located one and a half days' travel south or southeast of Tipu.⁸⁵ This town was mentioned in 1677 by the Dominican Fr. Joseph Delgado, who actually passed through the town on his way from the Manche Chol towns to Tipu and from there on to Bacalar. Zauí's cacique was named Juan Muzul, suggesting that, as among other groups in the Peten region, the Muzul were a highly localized group named after their dominant political family.

Spanish troops were simultaneously pursuing other such large-scale reductions around the mission towns on the outer fringes of Itza territory, especially along the camino real from Campeche toward Lake Peten Itza. By attempting to pacify these areas they were presumably ensuring the cooperation of the already missionized Indians—or at least guaranteeing that the inhabitants of towns and villages near the routes into the central Peten would not be able to hinder the ultimate goal of pacifying Tah Itza. The 1696 reductions around Tipu at last decisively reversed the effects of the 1638 rebellion, forcing Tipu into a posture of cooperation—or even collaboration—with Spanish designs on Tah Itza. No longer in a position of maintaining its own independence with the assistance of the Tah Itza political hierarchy, Tipu was reduced to a position of powerlessness in the face of the first genuinely committed and realistic Spanish military plans to conquer the last of the Maya frontiers.

10: EPILOGUE



The great peten, or principal island of the Itzas, was already abandoned by that countless multitude of gentiles by eight thirty on the morning of that same day . . . as so barbarous are its inhabitants that rather than surrender or accept peace, they preferred to die—to [submit themselves to] the might of the weapons or to the waters of the deep, wide lake. Wishing above all to be free, they were willing to forfeit the comfort of their homes, properties, and children. As a result, only two Indian men, some Indian women (one very old), and children could be captured, because a great many of the Indian women had thrown themselves into the water, even with their infants in their arms.¹

The military conquest of the Itzas came early on the morning of 13 March 1697. The attack on the island of Tah Itza, pursued from a boat outfitted with a cannon and loaded with soldiers armed with arquebuses, quickly dispersed the Mayas, whose canoes and bows and arrows were no match for the firearms of the Spaniards.² Once in possession of the island, which Martín de Ursúa named Nuestra Señora de los Remedios y San Pablo de los Itzaes (Our Lady of Refuge and Saint Paul of the Itzas), the general soon discovered that the conquest had been a hollow one.³ Virtually the entire resident population had fled, leaving the Spaniards to fend for themselves. The military excitement over the destruction of "idols" was soon dampened by the hard work of reconstructing pagan temples and habitations that could serve the religious, military, and administrative needs of the new Spanish presidio.

Within a short time panic began to set in over the lack of food and supplies for the Spanish troops. The Spaniards spent the next weeks and months attempting to extract food from the surrounding towns, to secure provisions from Guatemala, and to fight the frightening realities

of growing hunger and epidemic disease. They faced a largely hostile native population, and commentators soon opined that whatever military victory had been attained was of little value, as so few souls had yet been won for God and crown.

Only gradually, over a period of several years, were the Spanish able to begin the process of reduction and missionization that had been the original goals of the Itza conquest. The preparation for the conquest, the event itself, and the subsequent processes of reconstruction and reconciliation together constitute one of the most remarkable and best-documented episodes of Spanish-native conflict in colonial Latin American history. And it is at this juncture—the culmination of a century and a half of colonial history—that this narrative must end.

My own research on the Itza conquest and its aftermath is already under way. That study will be a far more challenging task than the present work, as the documentation pertaining to the Itza conquest and consolidation of Spanish control over the Peten dwarfs in scope and complexity the sources available for the southeastern frontier in previous years. The accessibility of Villagutierre Soto-Mayor's encyclopedic account of these events, recently published in a carefully edited English translation, has up to now been a deterrent to serious study of the abundant primary sources in the Archivo General de Indias and other repositories.⁴ Villagutierre's work, first published in 1701, was, however, a political document, commissioned by the crown and designed explicitly to cast the best possible light upon Ursúa's disastrous enterprise. As it is marred by errors of fact, biased interpretations, the absence of citations, the author's lack of familiarity with the region, and a xenophobic posture toward the Maya actors, readers should be aware that Villagutierre's work must be read with extreme caution. For the moment, however, it is the best account available to those readers who wish to pursue the story of Maya-Spanish conflict in the Guatemalan Peten.

We must, nonetheless, conclude the saga of Tipu, although we know little about that town's final years. The end of Tipu, the last remaining Maya mission community of the Bacalar province, finally came in late 1707. Martín de Ursúa, who had just been appointed governor of the Philippines, wrote two letters to the crown detailing the conditions in which he was leaving the new missions of the Itza province.⁵ He noted that the administration of Tipu had been particularly difficult since the "great general famine" of 1647 to 1650, which had sent many Indians to the region around Tipu in search of sustenance.⁶ Compounding the difficulties was a marked increase in English logwood-cutting activities

in the coastal region of Belize known as Las Cocinas, to which Ursúa had sent troops to displace the English population in 1696.⁷

Following the Itza conquest of 1697, Ursúa wrote, Spaniards from Yucatan carried off inhabitants from Tipu, presumably as forced laborers. This practice, one of many tragic ironies of the day, was allowed despite the fact that some of the inhabitants of Tipu cooperated with the Spaniards in pacifying the areas around the lake and in attacking English logwood cutters who had settled at Zacatan.⁸ Even worse, the English themselves also began to raid the town for slaves. On this basis and the following, Ursúa justified Tipu's removal to the shores of Lake Peten Itza, placing the burden of responsibility on the bishop of Yucatan:

And Tipu being located not more than twenty-five to thirty leagues from the presidio of the Itza, where they can be administered without risk, like those who have been recently reduced, and in order to avoid the next occasion of their ancient and continuing idolatry, [which] has come to the attention of the most illustrious and revered lord bishop of these provinces, his most illustrious gave permission that the Indians [of Tipu be relocated] in the new province of the Itza. In consideration of which the said Captain Don Joseph de Aguilar should proceed to carry this out, to settle them in convenient locations, and confirm their elections of magistrates and of the others named annually as ministers, reducing them economically, politically, and socially like all of those who occupy those territories, ensuring principally that they hold their missionaries in the great reverence and veneration that is owed them, punishing . . . those persons who put any impediment in the way of the service of the two majesties.⁹

Ursúa granted Aguilar, who then administered the Peten region, the authority to accomplish this task, which apparently took several months to complete. On January 24, 1708, he wrote again to the crown about the conditions of the Itza reductions, noting that by the end of December 5,200 souls had been "catechized and administered," of whom 3,161 had been baptized. Tipu, which had yet to be relocated, had been attacked by its disenchanted Muzul neighbors, who had killed the town's cacique, his lieutenant, and as many as fifteen principales. Captain Aguilar responded to the attack by sending 25 Spanish soldiers and nearly 200 recently reduced Mayas to apprehend the Muzules, who were found near the scene of the crime.

In this his last letter on the subject, Ursúa was apparently still uninformed about the final outcome of the relocation of Tipu. He noted,

however, that there were now five towns on the lakeshore: Jesús María, San José, San Gerónimo, San Miguel, and San Andrés. Tipu's remaining population must soon have joined the rest of the thousands of dislocated souls who were distributed forcibly among these communities. From this time Tipu's identity as an autonomous community ceased. The stubborn Maya town finally paid the debts that it had accumulated from years of tenuous survival on a frontier that was being radically transformed.

The late seventeenth-century British settlers of the coasts of Belize and eastern Yucatan had been primarily interested in the extraction of the logwood that grew along the coastal lakes, marshes, and rivers in such profusion. Some of them were dangerous adversaries, justifiably regarded by the Spanish in the early years as ruthless slavers and pirates.¹⁰ During the eighteenth century, British logwood extraction increased in scope throughout much of Belize, leading Governor Antonio de Figueroa to reestablish Bacalar in 1729 as a fortification from which to attack these foreign logwood establishments. A large fort, still in existence, was built at Bacalar, and immigrants from the Canary Islands were brought to repopulate the town.¹¹ British-Spanish hostilities over the logwood establishments characterized the entire century, despite periodic efforts to reach diplomatic agreement over the terms of British settlement.

Maya populations continued to occupy the western portions of Belize during this period, sometimes responding violently to the steady incursions of British woodcutters advancing even further up the rivers in search of stands of an additional source of green wealth—the mahogany tree.¹² To these colonists, who brought with them teams of Black slaves, the Mayas who still remained in the area were an impediment to their extractive activities.¹³ Not until late in the century, however, do we learn from British woodcutters of their encounters with the native populations. O. Nigel Bolland has located several British references to Maya attacks on mahogany teams working along the mid-Belize and New rivers during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.¹⁴ Typical of these descriptions was that of Captain George Henderson of the Fifth West India Regiment, who in 1809 wrote that

not many years past, numerous tribes of hostile Indians often left their recesses in the woods for the purpose of plunder. This they often accomplished; and if resistance were offered, not infrequently committed the most sanguinary murders. The habitations of these people have never been traced. Their dispositions are peculiarly ferocious¹⁵

These Mayas, who must have considered themselves as the plundered and the British the plunderers, probably represented a variety of

origins. Some must have been from Tipu and its environs, others from the so-called Muzul settlements, and still others from a variety of communities around Lake Peten Itza. As time passed, their original political affinities would have faded in importance, as there remained no external political stimuli to cause them to identify themselves in a world of careful, planned intrigue. There were no longer any Tipus in the territory that had once been the Bacalar province—towns caught in the maze of Maya-Spanish conflict over territorial and population control. Now there were only refugees without a major political center, fighting helplessly as they witnessed a new invasion of British colonists whose interests were single-mindedly focused upon the extraction of timber.

Of the fate of the other Maya towns in the Bacalar province we know almost nothing. Most had presumably been abandoned following the rebellion of 1638, although some may have been resettled in subsequent years. The coastal towns from Zacatan north were certainly deserted, and the Yucatecan scout Joseph Güemes indicated little in the way of population around the abandoned town of Bacalar in 1729.¹⁶ We presently have no way of knowing whether or not any of the interior towns of Belize, other than Tipu and its immediate environs, were repopulated. Pacha, the Maya town which served as the seat of the villa of Salamanca de Bacalar during the 1650s, was abandoned sometime thereafter, when the villa was moved further north to Chunhuhub. Chunhuhub and its neighboring Maya town, Polyuc, remain thriving communities to this day, however.

Chanchanha, the principal late seventeenth-century mission town of La Pimienta, was occupied on and off until its final abandonment in 1862, after it was burned by the rebel Santa Cruz Maya and its inhabitants resettled at the new site of Icaiche nearer the Belize border.¹⁷ Bacalar, which slipped back and forth between Santa Cruz and Mexican control from the outbreak of the Caste War of Yucatan in 1848 until 1901, is now a busy town along the highway between Ciudad Chetumal (today the capital of Quintana Roo) and the populations of northern Yucatan. Tourists may visit its eighteenth-century church and enjoy the view of the extensive, deep blue lake from the eighteenth-century fortress, which today is a museum. But like Ciudad Flores, the once-fortified Guatemalan town constructed above the island ruins of Tah Itza, Bacalar provides only the most sensitive and imaginative of visitors with a vision of lost peoples and places.

Scholars of the Native American experience under colonial rule can ignore the complexity of historical process only at the risk of missing the

meaning of history itself. This book began with the challenge that what appears to have been static and unknowable—the “mysterious” darkness of the sparsely inhabited Maya forests of recent times—can be unveiled to reveal a vivid world of human activity. No matter how pale the accomplishments of the post-conquest Mayas may appear in contrast to the richness of their forebears’ Classic Period aesthetic and material achievements, we discover that our visual images have deceived us. Even in regions as remote as southeastern Yucatan, native struggles for survival and achievement, under the harshest of colonial conditions, turn out to have been remarkable examples of the human will to resist cultural destruction and economic exploitation.

That these people left little in the way of material remains or even native documents should be no surprise, in retrospect, for their resources were meagre, their numbers relatively few, and their energies focused on resistance and survival. Even more important, they were a people in hiding, using the frontier as a metaphorical wall behind which they had to keep secret their political plans, their beliefs, and even their economic activities. To expose these confidences to external colonial scrutiny would have been to invite the premature conquest that they struggled so hard to avoid.

The jungle—the frontier beyond the gaze of European civilization—was, then, a mysterious place only to Europeans themselves. Behind the wall of vegetation were ordinary people who behaved with admirable creativity in order to make certain that others minded their own business. They managed to carry out “pagan” rituals and made “idols” in the houses next door to the church, where they dutifully attended mass upon the arrival of the visiting priest. They pursued underground trade in cacao, beeswax, cloth, and steel tools, even while local Spaniards collected the required tribute payments and extorted an additional percentage of their valuable goods. Their maestros spread the prophetic words of the katun prophecies, sometimes stirring up plans for violent rebellion, even while they were teaching their children the required verses of the catechism. And their leaders arranged unpublicized marriages among the noble families of Tipu and Tah Itza, even while some among them accepted the sacraments of baptism and marriage from the Spanish priests.

Of course, well-informed Spaniards had to have been aware of this complex underground world of the Mayas. Otherwise, we would not have been able to reconstruct even the small amount that we have managed to offer here. This awareness, however, did not allow them to contain the more subtle processes of resistance. Captain Francisco de Mirones, for example, should have known in 1624 that Maya leaders around

Sacalum were whispering dangerous plots behind his back—but he had no means of exposing the backstage of Maya politics in order to put a stop to the plans to murder him and his companions. The men of Bacalar certainly did know in 1638 that Itza-inspired prophets were spreading the seeds of violent discontent throughout their province—but they were unable to discover the roots of the plot or the sources of the rumors in order to stop the flight of their subjects to Tipu. And even though the friars Orbita and Fuensalida thought that they understood the significance of Katun 3 Ahau, they failed to convince Can Ek and his advisers to act upon their perceived knowledge.

Such examples demonstrate that to be partially aware of the Other's thoughts and plans does not necessarily imply the capacity to manipulate the Other into doing one's own will. The fatal flaw of Spanish colonial policy in Yucatan—a flaw that was never corrected even after many decades of hard-won experience—was the failure to recognize that forced economic exploitation and punishment for those who attempted to avoid it further strengthened the will to resist. This is the special insight that we gain in examining the southern frontier, which the native population perceived as a place where freedom from colonial meddling and exploitation could be achieved and maintained.

The structural constancy of the tributary economy was nothing short of remarkable, and so was the Maya response to it. The more the Spanish imposed economic demands, the more their subjects sought refuge in flight. The more the colonists attempted to tighten the reins by burning down the runaways' towns and rounding up their subjects, the less able they were to convince those who had resisted that life in an *encomienda* town offered a better alternative. As the dynamic cycle of movement back and forth across the frontier was played out again and again, the Spanish strategy remained unchanged despite its manifest failure.

Playing against this structural constant of cyclical motion was the true force of change—the Maya recognition that time has its own laws. The Mayas, unable to hide their political philosophy of time completely but eminently successful in concealing their political means of activating that philosophy, simply waited for the opportune moment to strike. The Spanish cycle was short-term and shortsighted, recognizing no possibility of new solutions to old problems. The Maya cycle, however, was long-term in scope, patient in its anticipation of fulfillment. When the first significant climax of that cycle finally appeared in 1638, the *vecinos* of Bacalar, unable to look beyond their own nearsighted interests, were bewildered by the intensity of Maya willingness to turn their relationship to the colonial system upside down. Although the Spaniards may

have known what was happening, they were unable to grasp how it could possibly work.

When the next significant moment of the Maya cycle neared its fulfillment in late 1696, even the governor of Yucatan thought that the colony's problems were soon to be solved. This time, however, the political meaning of time was surrender, not rebellion, and cries of opposition to Can Ek's overtures of peace soon broke out at Tah Itza, stifling Spanish hopes for a negotiated settlement. The stakes were too high for the fragile confederacy on Lake Peten Itza to accept one leader's interpretation of the long-term cycle, for to do so meant nothing less than the end of Maya time. To surrender meant to accept Spanish time, which was designed, among other things, to exploit the native Other for the short-term economic desires of the colonial Self. Never again would the long-term vision of history be regained should surrender be allowed, because for most frontier Mayas, I believe, the meaning of that vision signified eventual release from colonial subjugation.

Except for those, like the Tipuans, who were powerless to avoid the final onslaught of soldiers and missionaries, the Maya decision was therefore to challenge the fate that the katun cycle had placed upon them. Although "victorious" troops stormed Tah Itza without significant resistance and the conquest seemed to have been won, first appearances had deceived the new lords of the Peten. The Spanish soon found themselves adrift in a green expanse of forest without food to eat, souls to convert, or labor to exploit. The "conquered" had drifted away, abandoning the conquerer. Despite subsequent short-term minor successes in applying the old method of roundup, Spanish dreams of truly governing the inhabitants of Tah Itza, the ancient stronghold of Maya resistance, never materialized.

This is, of course, an oversimplified view of the long term of frontier colonial history in Yucatan. I have not tried—nor is it possible—to subsume every event within such an uncluttered structural framework. History is a messy process; it stammers along with mistakes and mis-steps, no matter how much its participants and critics may wish to idealize it. This chronicle has offered no exception to the rule. Two dangers of historical interpretation therefore face every intrepid sojourner in past times—finding too much meaning on the one hand and finding too little on the other. I have sought to steer a middle course between these alternatives, recognizing that the next traveler may well find a better route through the forests.

APPENDIX: LOCATIONS OF MAYA SETTLEMENTS

Broadly speaking, the Maya towns within the general province of Bacalar fell into five clusters during the Spanish colonial period. The first were those nearest the villa north of the Río Hondo, both along the coast and inland, especially along the northern road to Chunhuhub. They appear to be identified, albeit loosely and with much-changed populations in later years, with the contact-period Uaymil province. The second cluster was that group of towns south of the Río Hondo in the general vicinity of Corozal Bay and along the New River as far south as New River Lagoon. These appear to be within the boundaries of the contact-period Chetumal province. A third group of towns was located on the middle and upper reaches of the Belize River and were almost certainly the core of the region identified during the 1544 Pacheco conquest as Zuluiniques, or Dzuluinicob. Less well known are the several towns of coastal Belize, which seem to have had a separate identity throughout the colonial period. Finally, we must consider the region known as La Pimienta, about which little is yet understood. In a region outside the emphasis of this study were the Manche Chol-speaking towns of southern Belize.

The following pages offer a summary of much of what is presently known about the location, known period of occupation, and selected historical information concerning the towns in these five regions. When possible, physical locations—even when approximate—are given on the map on pages xviii–xix.

THE UAYMIL PROVINCE

Most of the little that is known about the location of Maya towns in the immediate vicinity of the villa of Bacalar was presented in Chapter 2. That information will be recapped here, and some additional details concerning settlements that were probably outside the bounds of the Uaymil province proper, but within the local domain of the villa of Bacalar, will be added.

Mazanahau

In Chapter 2 I suggested that Mazanahau, a large town where Dávila's party was hosted in 1531 and 1532, was the same as the later crown pueblo of Mazanila and may well have been the same as the "ruined town" of Guazam on a 1726 map. All of the evidence points to its location on Chac Creek just above its juncture with the Río Hondo. Mazanila, unlike most of the private encomiendas of the Bacalar province, actually paid its tributes in cacao during the early seventeenth century.

Yumpeten

This town, as discussed in Chapter 2, was located a short distance north of Lake Bacalar on Lake Nohbec. First noted by Dávila and Luján at this location during their entrada in 1531–1532, it survived into the seventeenth century. It was part of the encomienda of Yumpeten and Chanlacan during the 1630s, and its inhabitants were implicated in flight and anti-Spanish resistance during 1638.¹

Chable and Xoca

Alonso Dávila's own account of his entrada through the Cochua and Uaymil provinces on his way to Chetumal in 1531 indicates that Chable² was not only within the Uaymil province not far from Bakhalal. From Chable he passed by large lakes (an apparent reference to Lake Xoca or San Felipe and Lake Bacalar) and crossed Lake Bacalar in canoes before departing for Chetumal.³ Following an armed encounter at Mazanahau some time later, Dávila's party returned toward the north to Chable:

which was a good sized town about six leagues ahead on the path [from Mazanahau] that did not seem to have wanted to make war, for it had continued to provide us with the supplies that I had ordered them to bring. When we arrived at this town of Chable, we found a fortification in front and the people at war, about which I and all who were along marvelled greatly because we thought they were as we had left them. . . . When we came upon the rear of the town we found it to be deserted with all the people gone. We spent four days in this town trying to make peace with them.⁴

Elsewhere Dávila states that Chable "is the town where you pick up the path to the province of Cochuaque [Cochua]."⁵

Given this and other information it is clear that Chable was located six leagues in a generally northern direction from Mazanahau, which I believe was on or near Chac Creek south of Lake Bacalar and near the

Río Hondo. Although Chable is not heard from by this name following the 1544 conquest, it is possible that it was the town later known as Xoca, located on Lake Xoca (Laguna San Felipe on modern maps). Xoca⁶ appears on the 1726 reconnaissance map on the northern end of a mis-drawn Lake Xoca (which indicates that the surveyor was unaware of the eastern extension of Laguna San Felipe), just under six leagues northwest of Bacalar.⁷ Xoca consequently would have been about nine leagues from the posited location of Mazanahau—not a serious error in these roughly gauged distances.⁸

Melchor Pacheco held half of Xoca in encomienda after the conquest of the Bacalar region in 1544, along with half of Bacalar, before the villa's inhabitants had been assigned to the crown.⁹ In 1570 Xoca was held in encomienda by Beatriz de Escobar, the mother-in-law of Salvador Carrillo. At that time it was known as a *pueblo pasajero*, a stopping-off place for travellers going to Bacalar. Indian traders bringing clothing to sell to Spaniards in Bacalar brought their goods to Xoca, where, according to several witnesses, the alcalde Salvador Carrillo embargoed the goods, paying the traders less than their value and taking the clothing to his house in Bacalar for resale even though it was intended for other individuals.¹⁰

Xoca, which was on the 1582 list of Bacalar province towns,¹¹ was assigned in encomienda to Mateo Delgado in 1589.¹² Although it appeared on the 1726 reconnaissance map as "Hoca, Pueblo arruinada," I have found no record of the town in the seventeenth century.¹³ During a trip to the region in July 1988, Richard Leventhal and I found what we are almost certain must be the ruins of Xoca, situated on the western shore of Laguna San Felipe, near the present village of Lázaro Cárdenas. Its location is precisely where it appears on the 1726 map.

Roys included Pacha and Tzucacab in the Uaymil province, although we have no firm evidence that the boundary of the province extended that far north.¹⁴

Pacha

This town, to which the Spanish population of Bacalar retreated in about 1648, was part of the original Pacheco encomienda and also appeared on the 1582 list of Bacalar parishes. It is well known from various maps (where it is only vaguely located), but to the best of my knowledge it has yet to be identified on the ground.¹⁵ Fuensalida estimated that it was fifteen leagues south of Chunhuhub along the road to Bacalar, ten leagues north of Xoca.¹⁶ Its position is detailed on the 1726 reconnaissance map, where it appears just under two leagues east of a "Lag^{na} de Hocin" and just over two leagues south of a "Laguna de Chamaxú."¹⁷

These are probably the lakes named Peten Tutix and Paytoro, respectively, on a recent Mexican map, suggesting that Pacha was located several kilometers directly east of Lake Peten Tutix.¹⁸

Tzucacab

Tzucacab, which also appeared on the 1582 list, is identified on the 1726 map about six leagues south of Chunhuhub and about three and a half leagues northwest of a "Lag^{na} de Holbon." Lake Holbon would be the lake named X-Kojoli on modern maps, a short distance north of Lake Paytoro, indicating that Tzucacab was located just east of Highway 293 a short distance south of the side road to El Ramonal. Roys placed Queh-tun (Kitun), also part of the Pacheco encomienda and on the 1582 list, somewhere between Pacha and Tzucacab, but he seems to have had no good reason for doing so.

THE CHETUMAL PROVINCE

The Chetumal province appears to have been confined primarily to the shoreline of Chetumal Bay, including Corozal Bay and perhaps extending a short distance up the New and Hondo rivers. This is not to say that it did not also include Ambergris Cay and other shorelines further east, but we have no information for these areas.

Chetumal and Tamalcab

The accounts of Luján and Dávila (see Chapter 2) are absolutely critical for ascertaining the location of the town of Chetumal itself, and they appeared to be consistent. Dávila's account suggests that the party sailed three leagues (either north or south) from a coastal point near the south end of the lake (i.e., from the mouth of the Río Hondo), while Luján suggests that they travelled two leagues from the point at which they reached the coast (either north or south) after receiving the canoes at Bacalar and crossing the lake. Luján states further that Chetumal was located between the lake (whose length he estimated almost exactly at twelve leagues) and the coast, suggesting that it was along the coast *north* of the Río Hondo. From these two early reports we must conclude that Chetumal itself was located two or three leagues from the mouth of the Río Hondo, and that the more probable location was *north* of this point. The most likely candidate for Chetumal, given this interpretation, would be the complex of sites that includes the walled site of Ichpaatun as well as Oxtancah and San Manuel, opposite Tamalcab Island. These sites are located along a stretch of coast for several kilo-

meters north of Calderitas.¹⁹ Chetumal might well have also extended onto Tamalcab Island.²⁰

The sixteenth- and seventeenth-century town of Tamalcab, which is almost certainly the site known as La Iglesia, might well have been built adjacent to the ruins of Chetumal.²¹ The partially standing church at La Iglesia would have been that of Tamalcab, not the earlier one of Villa Real (also located at the settlement of Chetumal), as the Villa Real church was dismantled when Dávila's party abandoned the settlement.²² It should be pointed out that the colonial town of Tamalcab was on the mainland and is therefore not the same as the site of that name located on Tamalcab Island.

Confusing this otherwise consistent picture of Chetumal's location is the only other known colonial-period reference to its location, that of Fray Bartolomé Fuensalida, who in 1618 visited an estancia at the long-abandoned site of the ancient Chetumal. We know Fuensalida's account only through its secondary interpretation by the seventeenth-century Franciscan historian López de Cogolludo, who apparently tended to gloss over topics in the original text that did not interest him—and the location of Chetumal seems to have been one such topic. Fuensalida's relación concerns, among other things, his party's journey from Salamanca de Bacalar to Tipu, which they initiated by traveling by canoe from Lake Bacalar to the Río Hondo and from the mouth of the Hondo along the coast to the New River, where they began the long trip through Belize to Tipu.

López de Cogolludo reported that once they had reached the sea from the Río Hondo: "they covered a distance of three leagues before arriving at an estancia of a citizen from the villa who was staying there and who received them warmly, providing them with refreshments to use later on. The estancia is where, at the time of the conquest of this land, the great town of Chetemal was founded" ²³ No better at directions than Luján and Dávila, Fuensalida apparently omitted saying whether he had gone north or south. His next stopping point was the abandoned pueblo of Uatibal, located near Lowrey's Bight east of the mouth of the New River or Dzuluinicob. A route three leagues *north* to the estancia at Chetumal would have taken Fuensalida out of his way, making it appear that the estancia was located on Corozal Bay in the vicinity of the present-day town of Corozal near the mouth of the New River. It appears, on the other hand, that Fuensalida's party and their host, the *alcalde ordinario* of Bacalar, were probably put up for the night at the estancia and outfitted with proper supplies for the long journey ahead. A slight diversion in the route, therefore, would have been for a

good purpose. We also know that this *alcalde* was carrying out a fine-collecting *visita* on this trip, and we may presume that he was anxious to visit all the towns in his jurisdiction. The *alcalde* would have used a stop at the *estancia* to visit any nearby Maya towns.

It is possible that while Fuensalida and his companion Fray Juan de Orbita were being hosted at the *estancia* and shown around the ruins of the ancient Chetumal, the *alcalde* was busy making his collections at the adjacent town of Tamalcab.²⁴ From there they went directly to Uatibal, but finding it completely abandoned went on their way up the New River. Tamalcab is scarcely mentioned in the seventeenth century, but it still existed in 1638, when it served as a reduction town for runaway Mayas. It was said to be four leagues from Bacalar. As the crow flies, Tamalcab would actually have been about nineteen kms (slightly under five leagues) from the site of the villa.

The name Tamalcab may have been either a later corruption, a variant, and/or a partial form of Chetumal (Chetemal or Chitemal in some early documents). According to the early colonial-period Vienna dictionary, Tamal Kab meant "otro mundo" (apparently from *tam* [deep], *kab* [land]), presumably referring to the underworld.²⁵ *Che'*, of course, can mean tree (or wood), suggesting the meaning "tree of the underworld" for a reconstructed full name of *Che' Tamal Kab*. *Kab* also refers to "bee" or to the traditional Maya beehives made of tree trunks, which Luján described in detail as being in plentiful supply at the just-abandoned Chetumal in 1531—suggesting an alternate meaning of something like "wood [*che'*] deep [*tam*] beehive [*kab*]" for *Che' Tamal Kab*.²⁶ Either of these possibilities is made more intriguing due to the complete disappearance of a place called Chetumal after 1532 and the emergence of the name Tamalcab at a place where Chetumal may well have been located.

The evidence summarized here by no means rules out the location of Chetumal at the site of Santa Rita Corozal²⁷ or elsewhere on Corozal Bay, as has long been argued by a variety of scholars, myself not excepted.²⁸ The sources are clear on the distance from the mouth of the Hondo but vague on the crucial question of direction. Yet another careful reading of these sources appears to favor a northern location, however; archaeological research should be pursued in the Ichpaatun-Oxtancah area in the hope of eventually clarifying this important issue.

Chequitaquil

From Dávila's account we know only that Chequitaquil, to which the inhabitants fled from Chetumal before his arrival, was four leagues by sea from Chetumal:

After [Villa Real] had been established for two months, I found out through the Indians that the lord of Chetumal with some of his warriors was held up in a town named Chequitaquil and was planning to attack us from there. In order not to give him the opportunity to attack us, I together with five horses and half of the people went almost four leagues by sea to avoid going by land and attacked them.²⁹

Alonso Luján told Oviedo that the distance of this settlement (which he did not name) was three leagues from Chetumal along the "coast above," so we can assume that Chequitaquil was between three and four leagues north of Chetumal.³⁰

If Chetumal, as I have suggested, was located around Ichpaatun along the coast north of the Río Hondo, a location four leagues north of that site would place Chequitaquil around Punta Sinantun at the opening of the channels that once connected Chetumal Bay with the northern end of Lake Bacalar. A site of that name is noted on the 1940 Middle American Research Institute map of the Maya area, located on the northern shore of this waterway about ten kms inland.³¹ Hamilton and Cobos, who do not note this site in their recent survey of Chetumal Bay, have identified another nearby site, unnamed, along the small bay to the west of Punta Sinantun, just south of the mouth of this waterway.³² Either of these sites would be good candidates for Chequitaquil.

If, on the other hand, Chetumal was located at Santa Rita, Corozal Town, a location about three leagues north of that site would place Chequitaquil at Punta Consejo in Belize near the mouth of the Río Hondo.

Chanlacan

During 1547 Chanlacan was the seat of the first recorded rebellion in the Bacalar province, by which time it had apparently become the headquarters of the Chetumal province.³³ A town of this name was still in existence as late as 1654. Although its location had been speculated upon by Roys and Thompson, it appears on no known Spanish-period maps; nor do the initial speculations of Roys, Scholes, and Thompson stand up to new documentary information.

The location of Chanlacan has been a point of confusion for some time, perhaps due to López de Cogolludo's claim that it was "on a small island completely surrounded by water, well fortified and thus dangerous of approach. . . ." Scholes and Thompson therefore suggested that the town was on Albion Island in the Río Hondo, while Roys surmised that it was "on one of the small lagoons between Lake Bacalar and the Río Hondo." A close reading of López de Cogolludo's description sug-

gests, however, that he was merely embellishing an early Spanish report that Chanlacan was simply “poblado en el agua.” In this report, prepared by Juan de Aguilar, who had quelled the 1547 rebellion at Chanlacan, it was reported that Aguilar and his party “went with canoes by water, lakes, and rivers until reaching the said town of Chanlacan, which is settled upon the water [poblado en el agua].”

All sources from this period agree that Chanlacan was “on the water,” suggesting its location on a lake, saltwater or freshwater lagoon, or river, approachable by canoe from Bacalar. Aguilar’s statement that it was reached “by water, lakes, and rivers” suggests a route across open water, then along a passage of lakes and rivers. The route conforming best to these characteristics would have taken Aguilar across Corozal Bay to Lowrey’s Bight, then up Laguna Seca and John Piles Creek to Progreso Lagoon. This, however, is a great distance from Lamanai, whose inhabitants were assigned the task of finding those of Chanlacan, suggesting that perhaps Aguilar’s route went up the New River to New River Lagoon. If, on the other hand, this was a case where besieged and frightened townspeople had run away temporarily to a more inland location (a very common pattern in the seventeenth century), then a location on Progreso Lagoon would be more likely.

More details about Chanlacan appear in the early 1650s during efforts by Captain Francisco Pérez of Bacalar (by then abandoned and removed northward to Pacha, on the road to Chunhuhub) to repacify the region abandoned by the Spanish after the 1638 rebellion. In 1652, while he was interim governor of the Bacalar province, Pérez sent four Spaniards to remove the inhabitants of Chanlacan and Hautila from their location along the water’s edge (*vera del agua*) or on an inlet (*lengua de agua*), as some of them had already been captured by Dutch pirates in the area. The survivors were taken in 1654 to an unspecified inland location, from which they ran away to some lakes called Cantenal, about twenty leagues from Bacalar. Pérez recaptured some 200 of the runaways, whom he returned to their towns—presumably the new locations created in 1654.³⁴

Hautila was almost certainly Uatibal, whose location we shall see was almost certainly on Laguna Seca. We may presume, therefore, that the *lengua de agua* or *vera del agua* referred to the passage from Lowrey’s Bight inland. This interpretation suggests that in 1652 Chanlacan was still located on or near Progreso Lagoon, where it was probably located in 1546. In this case the sources, although individually unsatisfactory, together seem to point to a single location.

Uatibal

Uatibal was a town of little apparent significance, but we are fortunate to be able to narrow its location to a small area due to its appearance on a detailed eighteenth-century map. It is known to have been an *encomienda* as early as 1594, when the title was held by Antonio Hernández.³⁵ The Franciscans Fuensalida and Orbita visited it in 1618 on their way from Bacalar to Tipu. Thompson incorrectly interpreted López de Cogolludo to state that Uatibal was then abandoned. In fact, López wrote that it was abandoned at the time he was writing during the late 1650s, indicating that it had been depopulated during the 1638 rebellion.

The priests had stopped at an *estancia* almost certainly located on Corozal Bay, said to be the original site of Chetumal. From there they went to Uatibal, which was "near the beach." From Uatibal they went to the mouth of the Dzuluinicob, or New River. They did *not* pass by Chanlaca on their way up the New River, nor did they mention it in any of their travels as far as the Belize River, an omission that suggests that that town was indeed reached via Uatibal, not the New River.

In 1726, some eighty years after Bacalar had been abandoned and sixty-two years after the inhabitants of Chanlaca and Uatibal had run away from their towns from fear of Dutch pirates, Alejandro Joseph Güelles was sent by Governor Antonio de Figueroa of Yucatan to reconnoitre the old site of the villa with an eye to reoccupying and fortifying it against British logwood cutters. Güelles produced an itinerary and a detailed map, the latter indicating "Lag^{na} de Guatebal" at Laguna Seca and "Guatebal" at the mouth of Laguna Seca at Lowrey's Bight. In his diary Güelles indicated that he did not visit Laguna de Guatebal but that above it there was another *estero* or estuary that "leads to some considerable stands of logwood where I presume the English today have their cuttings."³⁶ The Spaniards at Bacalar had cacao orchards in the vicinity.

Scholes and Thompson incorrectly placed Uatibal near the mouth of the New River in the vicinity of Corozal Town.³⁷ From this new information we may locate it almost certainly on Laguna Seca, where the towns of Copper Bank and Chunox are found today.

THE DZULUINICOB REGION

Tipu

The principal town of the province, Tipu was situated in an attractive valley setting on the left branch of the Macal River, directly east of the modern town of Benque Viejo del Carmen. Today the remains of the

town lie under the cleared lands of a cattle ranch called Negroman.³⁸ The archaeological site has been examined over several seasons since 1980, and these investigations have provided valuable evidence that has reinforced and expanded the ethnohistorical knowledge of the town's history and activities.³⁹ These data, which provide insights concerning the town's settlement pattern, domestic and church architecture, the movement of trade goods, the production and use of ceremonial artifacts, subsistence, Christian burial patterns, and even the physical anthropology of the population, are still under investigation and will be analyzed in light of the ethnohistorical information in a subsequent publication. Tipu is particularly interesting archaeologically for the information that the site provides on the transition between the precontact (Late Postclassic) and early historic periods, although much of the archaeological information appears to be of late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century origin.

Lamanai

Also well known archaeologically, Lamanai (or Lamanay) was located on the western shore of New River Lagoon, just south of its northern juncture with the New (or Dzuluinicob) River.⁴⁰ Unlike Tipu, which is well documented in the ethnohistorical sources, Lamanai is seldom mentioned. This has been something of a puzzle, as archaeological study has revealed two ramada churches (an earlier, simple one similar to that known at Tipu, and a later one of more substantial construction) and a large quantity of Christian burials, in addition to evidence of domestic architecture.

We saw in Chapter 2 that Lamanai was certainly in existence by 1568, and I believe that it was established as an encomienda following the 1543–1544 conquest of this region. Various references to Lamanai can be found throughout this book, especially in regard to the role that it played during and following the rebellions of the late 1630s. I suspect that the later church might have been constructed on the eve of the 1638 rebellion as part of a major reduction effort, because in 1637 the vacant encomienda of Lamanai was said to be composed of "runaway Indians." Some of the town's inhabitants apparently abandoned the newly reduced town soon thereafter, and other were taken for safekeeping to San Juan Extramuros at Bacalar (see Chapter 7).⁴¹

On the south end of New River Lagoon was the "port" of Colmotz, less a town, apparently, than a spot at which canoes were moored by those making the overland trek to the Belize River.⁴²

Other New River and Belize River Towns

In 1618 the friars Fuensalida and Orbita passed the settlements of Punquy, Zonail, and Holpatin before arriving at Lamanai.⁴³ Their locations along the New River, however, are not known. Of these, Punquy and Holpatin appear on the 1582 list of Bacalar towns.⁴⁴ Holpatin was implicated in the 1638 rebellion, and some of its inhabitants were later found as part of the population of Tipu (see Chapters 7 and 8). Before 1622 Punquy had been part of an encomienda that included far-distant Pacha as well as a town called Mazanahau,⁴⁵ and in that year this group was combined with Chinam and an apparent reduction town called Tipu (not to be identified with the Tipu on the Macal River).⁴⁶

In a confusing passage, López de Cogolludo wrote that in 1641 Fuensalida and his companions passed through, apparently listed roughly in order, "the towns of Punay [Punquy?], Zonavil [Zonail], Laimaná [Lamanai], Zockzux [Zaczuz], Luku, Mazanahau, Zacathan, and Petenzub [Petentzuc], all of which were deserted by their inhabitants who had joined with the rebels from Tipu."⁴⁷ Since he had taken the same route up the New and Belize rivers that he had followed in 1618, all of these settlements must have been along these rivers.

Punquy and Zonail, listed before Lamanai, were therefore still along the New River, but Holpatin, because it had been burned and abandoned, was not observed. Past Lamanai they found Zaczuz and Lucu, well-known Belize River settlements (see below). Mazanahau, appearing after Lucu, must have been near that settlement on the Belize River; it is not to be confused with the earlier Mazanahau in the Uaymil province. Zacatan is the name of a well-known coastal town some of whose population must have relocated to the Belize River in the same general area by 1641. Petentzuc was reduced in 1615 along with Zaczuz,⁴⁸ and in 1622, listed as Petentzuc, it formed part of a new encomienda that included Zaczuz and Tipu on the Macal River, which the vacancy notice states were still in a process of reduction.⁴⁹

We can therefore be reasonably certain that Zaczuz, Lucu, and Petentzuc were all near one another along the Belize River during the early seventeenth century, and that Mazanahau and Zacatan were probably settled in the same vicinity after the 1638 rebellion. In 1618 Fuensalida arrived at Lucu, which was about twelve leagues below Tipu, after crossing overland from New River Lagoon across Labouring Creek (the Cancanilla River).⁵⁰ Scholes and Thompson placed Lucu in the vicinity of modern-day Never Delay or Mount Pleasant, as reasonable a guess as any.⁵¹ In 1641 the friars' arrival point on the Belize River was called, liter-

ally, "the hamlet where Chantome had been," and from there they had to travel upstream to Zaczuz.

Presumably, then, Zaczuz was a short distance upstream from Lucu. Near this settlement a small river known as Yaxteel Ahau flowed out of the mountains, and three leagues up the river in 1641 was located a town composed of Zaczuz inhabitants who had burned their old settlement.⁵² Scholes and Thompson considered Yaxteel Ahau to be Roaring Creek, which would place Zaczuz at or near Roaring Creek Village near Belmopan.⁵³ Alternatively, however, this river may have been Barton Creek further upstream, which would situate Zaczuz in the vicinity of the archaeological site of Baking Pot.

Somewhere below Lucu on the Belize River was the settlement of Chunukum, the place from which Captain Francisco Pérez made contact with the Tipuans in 1655 and at which he collected a partial census of the Belize River settlements (see Chapter 8). Scholes and Thompson surmised that Chunukum was near Lucu in the vicinity of Rock Dondo or Never Delay, but I suspect that it was somewhat further downstream.⁵⁴ As for Holzuz, the "port" from which Pérez embarked to reach the Belize River towns, I believe that Scholes and Thompson were mistaken in placing it on the south end of New River Lagoon.⁵⁵ A careful reading of Pérez's itinerary makes it clear that Holzuz was near the mouth of the Belize River itself.

Xibun

The Yucatec-speaking town of Xibun, which was involved in resistance activities from 1630 through the 1638 rebellion, was certainly located somewhere upstream on the Sibun River. None of the documentation provides specific clues concerning its precise location, however.⁵⁶

THE BELIZE COASTAL REGION

We learned in Chapter 2 that Spanish would-be conquerors saw no towns along the Belize coast in 1532. In later years, however, several towns were established, presumably under Spanish influence, that served to monitor the coastline and to provide lodging and supplies for travelers. One of these, a small port at the mouth of the Belize River, was discussed above. Of the others we can be relatively certain of the locations of only Zacatan and Manan.

Zacatan

López de Cogolludo included a town called Zacatan among those passed between the New River and the upper Belize River by Fuensalida and his companions in 1641. By then the town's population had apparently moved inland temporarily following the 1638 rebellion, for Zacatan is well known to have been a coastal town, located at some point north of the Belize River. The town is well represented on seventeenth-century maps, appearing as an island north of another island mistakenly identified as Lamanai—the latter being most probably, as we shall see, a representation of the southern coastal town of Manan.

Although it appears on maps as early as 1625, Zacatan is unknown in the historical record until 1630, when its inhabitants played a major role in helping the Spanish of Bacalar capture runaways at Xibun on the Sibun River and at the coastal Manche Chol town of Soite. The town was abandoned in 1638 during the general Belize Maya uprising.⁵⁷ From these documents it is clear that Zacatan was along the coast north of the Sibun River.⁵⁸ In fact, it appears to have been a regular stopping-off point for the Spaniards from Bacalar, who were accustomed to using the coastline as a trading route with Guatemala.

After 1638 Zacatan fell into the hands of pirates,⁵⁹ and it later became a regular base for English woodcutters and traders. It was attacked by the Spanish at least once in the early eighteenth century. According to Güelles, who wrote in 1726, it was located sixteen leagues along the coast from the mouth of the Río Hondo, which would place it at about the location of Spanish Point. From there it was four leagues to Río de Cedros (Potts Creek/Salt Creek?) and another four leagues to the mouth of the Belize River. The sum of these distances is almost exactly correct, based on a standard four-km league, so a location in the vicinity of Spanish Point, probably on Bennett's Lagoon, is possible. Another strong possibility, however, would be Northern River Lagoon about fourteen km south of Spanish Point, as this may be the "R. Sactham" of the Versailles Treaty maps of 1783.⁶⁰

Manan

Manan, another coastal town, was abandoned during the 1638 uprising along with Zacatan and Chinam, which may have been at the present Punta Consejo (see p. 66). Some of its inhabitants were captured and resettled at Tamalcab, which was located along the coast east of Bacalar opposite Isla Tamalcab, probably at the site known as La Iglesia.⁶¹ Hardly as well known as Zacatan, Manan also appears, however,

on the 1783 Versailles Treaty maps as “Lag^a Manan” just below the mouth of the Sibun River and with an opening to the sea. The town therefore was likely located on Southern Lagoon, the first coastal lagoon south of the Sibun River with an exit to the sea. The appearance of “Lamanay” on seventeenth-century maps as an island in this general area is most likely a mistaken representation of Manan.

A remaining coastal puzzle is the “*iglesia arruinada*,” or “church in ruins,” that appears on the aforementioned 1783 maps next to a coastal lagoon just north of the Belize River, perhaps on Midwinters Lagoon near Iguana Cay. There is no known Maya town at this location, although further documentary or archaeological research might shed light on its identity.

LA PIMIENTA

Ixpimienta

Ixpimienta was the major center of independent refugee Mayas in the region known as La Pimienta, an area known throughout the seventeenth century as a hotbed of apostate, runaway Mayas. Efforts to trace the precise path of the Mirones-Delgado expedition across the wilds of Quintana Roo, described in Chapter 6, are doomed to failure, given the vague distances and geographical descriptions provided by Mirones. *Aguadas* come and go, and modern maps based on aerial reconstructions during specific seasons are not reliable indicators of their presence during the dry season during which this party was traveling.

It may be possible, however, on the basis of Mirones’ identification of a settlement on the river called Uenzanha which he renamed Santa Cruz del Río, to fix a relatively precise location for Ixpimienta itself. The only river of any size in the area that they must have reached on this journey is called Río Escondido on modern maps. The headwaters of this stream begin about 89° 25’W, 18° 10’N, flowing in a northeasterly direction, roughly paralleling the Río Hondo; the stream then turns to the north, where it flows into the Río Hondo about seven kms (as the crow flies) from the mouth of that river just above Santa Lucía or Juan Sarabia.⁶² The Río Escondido is the same stream identified as Río Ukum on the 1878 Hübbe-Pérez map, and this is probably the same as Mirones’s Uenzanha or Santa Cruz del Río.⁶³

The Hübbe-Pérez map locates a place called Tzucpimienta on the west side of a swampy area into which the Río Ucum flows at about 89° 7’W, 18° 24’N. This location would place Tzucpimienta about three kms south of the modern settlement of Gustavo Díaz Ordaz on the Río Ucum

(or Escondido) about ten kms south of the modern Highway 186 (the Chetumal-Escárcega highway), and about twelve kms west of the modern San José Aguilar southwest of Nicolás Bravo.

Because Mirones's party apparently found Ixpimienta a short distance south of the Río Escondido, the location of Tzucpimienta on the Hübbe-Pérez map is very likely the original site of Ixpimienta itself. Nohpimienta, which also appears on this map about forty kms north of Tzucpimienta, would have been some twenty-five kms west of a tiny stream also called Escondido further to the north, making this an unlikely candidate for Ixpimienta.

Sacalum and Other Towns

In Chapter 6 I suggest that Sacalum, the mission town at which a number of individuals were murdered by Maya rebels in 1624, may have been the same location as the later Chanchanha (also Chichanha), whose formation in 1687 is discussed in Chapter 9. Santa Rosa de la Pimienta (also called Nuestra Señora del Rosario) was the alternative name for Chanchanha, whose location (called Chichanha) is well known from modern maps. Several other towns (including Holpat, Chuncuy, Dzibes, and Chekbul) that were founded during the 1687 entrada are discussed in relation to Chanchanha in the same chapter.

NOTES

The following abbreviations are used throughout the notes to refer to manuscript repositories:

AGI	Archivo General de Indias, Seville
AGS	Archivo General de Simancas, Valladolid
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid
NL	Newberry Library, Chicago

1: REDISCOVERING THE FUGITIVE

1. George Stuart and Gene W. Stuart, *The Mysterious Maya* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1977), p. 17.
2. Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, in *A Conrad Argosy* (Garden City: Doubleday, Doran, and Company, 1942), p. 49.
3. Peter D. Harrison and B. L. Turner II, *Pre-Hispanic Maya Agriculture* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1978).
4. Tatiana Proskouriakoff, "Historical Implications of a Pattern of Dates at Piedras Negras, Guatemala," *American Antiquity* 25 (1960): 454–75.
5. T. Patrick Culbert, ed., *The Classic Maya Collapse* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973).
6. Dorothy Hosler, Jeremy A. Sabloff, and Dale Runge, "Simulation Model Development: A Case Study of the Classic Maya Collapse," in *Social Process in Maya Prehistory: Studies in Honour of Sir Eric Thompson*, ed. Norman Hammond (New York: Academic Press, 1977), pp. 553–90.
7. E. S. Deevey, Don S. Rice, Prudence M. Rice, H. H. Vaughan, Mark Brenner, and M. S. Flannery, "Maya Urbanism: Impact on a Tropical Karst Environment," *Science* 206 (1979): 298–306.
8. John S. Henderson, *The World of the Ancient Maya* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), pp. 194–201.
9. William R. Bullard, *Topoxte: A Postclassic Maya Site in Petén, Guatemala*, Monographs and Papers in Maya Archaeology, ed. William R. Bullard, Paper 61 (Cambridge: Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, 1970), pp. 245–307.
10. Prudence M. Rice and Don S. Rice, "Topoxte, Macanche, and the Central Peten Postclassic," in *The Lowland Maya Postclassic: Questions and Answers*, ed. Arlen F. Chase and Prudence M. Rice (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), pp. 166–83; Prudence M. Rice, *Macanché Island, El Petón, Guatemala: Excavations*,

Pottery, and Artifacts (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1987); Don S. Rice and Prudence M. Rice, "Collapse to Conquest: Postclassic Archaeology of the Petén Maya, *Archaeology* 36 (1984): 46–51; Don S. Rice, "The Petén Postclassic: A Settlement Perspective," in *Late Lowland Maya Civilization: Classic to Postclassic*, ed. Jeremy A. Sabloff and E. Wyllys Andrews V (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986), pp. 301–44; Don S. Rice and Prudence M. Rice, "Muralla de León: A Lowland Maya Fortification," *Journal of Field Archaeology* 8, no. 3 (1981): 271–88; Prudence M. Rice and Don S. Rice, "La época postclásica en la región de los lagos de El Petén central, Guatemala," *Mesoamérica* 5, no. 8 (1984): 334–50.

11. But see Arlen F. Chase, "A Contextual Consideration of the Tayasal-Paxcámán Zone, El Petén, Guatemala" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1983).

12. Chase and Rice, eds., *The Lowland Maya Postclassic*.

13. The number of sources for Spanish colonial period archaeological research in Yucatan is rapidly growing, and a full list of references is beyond the scope of this chapter. Among recent published sources see the following.

For Tipu in western Belize see Grant D. Jones and Robert R. Kautz, "Arqueología y etnohistoria de una frontera española colonial: el proyecto Macal-Tipu en el oeste de Belize," *Revista Mexicana de Estudios Antropológicos* 31 (1985): 145–54; Grant D. Jones, Elizabeth Graham, and Robert R. Kautz, "Archaeology and Ethnohistory on a Spanish Colonial Frontier: An Interim Report on the Macal-Tipu Project in Western Belize," in *The Lowland Maya Postclassic*, ed. Chase and Rice, pp. 206–14; Grant D. Jones, Robert R. Kautz, and Elizabeth Graham, "Tipu: A Maya Town on the Spanish Colonial Frontier," *Archaeology* 39 (1986): 40–47; Daniel R. Muhs, Robert R. Kautz, and J. Jefferson MacKinnon, "Soils and the Location of Cacao Orchards at a Maya Site in Western Belize," *Journal of Archaeological Science* 12 (1985): 121–37.

For Lamanai on New River Lagoon, Belize, see David M. Pendergast, "Lamanai, Belize: Summary of Excavation Results, 1974–1980," *Journal of Field Archaeology* 8 (1981): 19–53; David M. Pendergast, "Royal Ontario Museum Excavation: Finds at Lamanai, Belize," *Archaeology* 30 (1970): 129–31; David M. Pendergast, "Lamanai, Belize: An Updated View," in Chase and Rice, eds., *The Lowland Maya Postclassic*, pp. 91–103; H. Stanley Loten, "Lamanai Postclassic," in *The Lowland Maya Postclassic*, pp. 85–90; David M. Pendergast, "Under Spanish Rule: The Final Chapter in Lamanai's Maya History," *Belcast Journal of Belizean Affairs* 3, nos. 1–2 (1986): 1–7.

For the eastern coast of Yucatan see Anthony P. Andrews, "The Archaeology and History of Northern Quintana Roo," in *Geology and Hydrogeology of the Yucatan and Quaternary Geology of Northeastern Yucatan Peninsula*, ed. W. C. Ward, A. E. Weidie, and W. Back (New Orleans: New Orleans Geological Society, 1985); Antonio Benavides Castillo and Anthony P. Andrews, *Ecab: poblado y provincia del siglo XVI en Yucatán*, Cuadernos de los Centros Regionales, Centro Regional de Sureste, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (México: INAH, 1979); Arthur G. Miller and Nancy M. Farriss, "Religious Syncretism in Colonial Yucatan: The Archaeological and Ethnohistorical Evidence from Tancah,

Quintana Roo," in *Maya Archaeology and Ethnohistory*, ed. Norman Hammond and Gordon R. Willey (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), pp. 223–40.

14. This point of view was particularly championed by J. Eric S. Thompson; see, for example, his "A Proposal for Constituting a Maya Subgroup, Cultural and Linguistic, in the Petén and Adjacent Regions," in *Anthropology and History in Yucatán*, ed. Grant D. Jones (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), p. 36. For contrasting discussions of this frontier see the following by Grant D. Jones: "Agriculture and Trade in the Colonial Period Southern Maya Lowlands," in *Maya Subsistence: Studies in Memory of Dennis E. Puleston* (New York: Academic Press), pp. 275–93; "The Last Maya Frontiers of Colonial Yucatan," in *Spaniards and Indians in Southeastern Mesoamerica*, ed. Murdo J. MacLeod and Robert Wasserstrom (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), pp. 64–91; "The Southern Maya Lowlands during Spanish Colonial Times," in *Ethnohistory*, ed. Ronald Spores, Supplement to the Handbook of Middle American Indians, series ed. Victoria Reifler Bricker, vol. 4 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), pp. 71–86.

15. This dichotomy is not accidentally similar to the folk-urban dichotomy applied by Robert Redfield to the modern Yucatan peninsula in his *The Folk Culture of Yucatan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941) and his "The Folk Society," *American Journal of Sociology* 52 (1947): 293–308.

16. See references listed in note 13.

17. For a discussion of encomienda tribute and the various taxes and ecclesiastical payments required of the Mayas of Yucatan see Nancy M. Farriss, *Maya Society under Colonial Rule: The Collective Enterprise of Survival* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 39–47.

18. Alistair Hennessy, *The Frontier in Latin American History* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1978).

19. R. A. Billington, ed., *Selected Essays of Frederick Jackson Turner: Frontier and Section* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1961).

20. Nancy M. Farriss, "Indians in Colonial Yucatan: Three Perspectives," in *Spaniards and Indians in Southeastern Mesoamerica*, ed. MacLeod and Wasserstrom, pp. 1–39.

21. Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Harper & Row, 1984).

22. It might be claimed that Landa in his *Relación* demonstrated a recognition of the Mayas as subjects in their own right as he reflected on them from the safe distance of a Spanish monastery. See Diego de Landa, *Landa's Relación de las cosas de Yucatan*, ed. and trans. Alfred M. Tozzer (Cambridge: Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, 1941). Francisco Palomino, the remarkable *defensor de naturales* who fought endless battles to protect the rights of Indians, might have come closer to achieving such a perception. See Sara Miller, "Francisco Palomino: Royal 'Protector and Defender' of Yucatecan Indians, 1569–1586," *Mesoamérica* 6, no. 9 (1985): 133–53.

23. European contact in this region was initiated by Hernán Cortés, who made an ambitious entrada through Putun, Cehach, Itza, Mopan, and Manche

Chol territory in 1525. Cortés's entrada is discussed briefly in Chapter 4; see Hernán Cortés, *Cartas de relación*, 9th ed. (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1976); Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *Historia verdadera de la conquista de Nueva España*, 7th ed. (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1977).

24. For a stimulating discussion of Maya concepts of time and the past see Nancy M. Farriss, "Remembering the Future, Anticipating the Past: History, Time, and Cosmology among the Maya of Yucatan," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 29 (1987): 566–93. Recent discussions of the Maya *katun* prophecies are found in Munro S. Edmonson, *The Ancient Future of the Itza: The Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982) and *Heaven Born Merida and its Destiny: The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986). For earlier studies of Maya prophecy see bibliographies in Edmonson's studies, especially Ralph L. Roys, *The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel*, 2nd ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967) and "The Maya Katun Prophecies of the Books of Chilam Balam, Series I," in Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 606, *Contributions to American Anthropology and History* 57 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1954), pp. 1–60.

25. France V. Scholes and J. Eric S. Thompson, "The Francisco Pérez *Probanza* and the *Matrícula* of Tipu," in *Anthropology and History in Yucatán*, ed. Jones, p. 67. See brief discussion of the Muzul during the late seventeenth century in Chapter 9.

26. The repartimiento in Yucatan was a form of advance payment (usually in the form of money, raw materials, or imported European goods) to Indian communities in anticipation of delivery of a specified local product (such as beeswax, honey, cotton cloth, and maize) within a specified time period (see Farriss, *Maya Society*, pp. 43–45). The repartimiento system was known as a corrupt and exploitative one, as the producers were forced upon pain of punishment to deliver the required goods. Despite its technical illegality, it reached its peak during the second half of the seventeenth century, by which time it was controlled primarily by the colonial governors and their employees.

27. This designation is not entirely accurate, as the Itzas proper were but one political entity of several about Lake Peten Itza.

28. For among the only summary treatments of the Itzas see J. Eric S. Thompson, "The Itza of Tayasal, Petén," in *Homenaje a Alfonso Caso* (México, 1951), pp. 389–400, and Robert M. Carmack, *The Quiché Mayas of Utatlán* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981), pp. 388–93.

29. Nancy M. Farriss, "Nucleation versus Dispersal: The Dynamics of Population Movement in Colonial Yucatan," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 58 (1978): 187–216. See also her discussion of these population movements in *Maya Society*, pp. 72–79, 199–214.

30. The east coast of the Yucatan peninsula was also a refuge zone for runaways. For a discussion of some of the ethnohistorical evidence for these regions see Anthony P. Andrews, Antonio Benavides Castillo, and Grant D. Jones, "Ecab: A Remote Encomienda of Early Colonial Yucatán, 1987," TMs., Hal C.

Ball Anthropology Laboratory and Maya Library, New College of the University of South Florida, Sarasota; Anthony P. Andrews and Grant D. Jones, "Sitios coloniales en las costa de Quintana Roo," paper presented at the XX Mesa Redonda de la Sociedad Mexicana de Antropología, México, D.F., Oct. 1987.

31. Victoria Reifler Bricker, *The Indian Christ, the Indian King: The Historical Substrate of Maya Myth and Ritual* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 87–118.

32. Scholes and Thompson, "The Francisco Pérez Probanza."

33. Usually written as Tayasal in the modern literature, but not infrequently Tah Itza (or some variant thereof) during the Spanish colonial period. The name probably signified "Lord of the Itza," referring to the fact that the Can Ek chiefs lived there.

34. That is, twenty times the Maya tun of 360 days.

35. I have followed Edmonson's guide to the modern calendrical correlation of the *katun* dates for the Spanish colonial period (Edmonson, *The Ancient Future*, p. 199).

36. Edmonson, *Heaven Born Merida*, pp. 37–47.

37. AGI, México 362, Governor to Fr. Payo de Rivera, 10 June 1678; AGI, México 1010, Relación de todo lo que ha pasado y pasa en el pueblo de San Antonio de Sahcabchen, 1669, and Governor to Viceroy, 10 June 1678, in Testimonio de autos, cartas, y diligencias tocantes al saco que el enemigo hizo en el puerto de San Francisco de Campeche, 1678.

38. Marshall Sahlins, *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981), p. 72.

39. A similar perspective was explored by Bricker in her structural analysis of history in *Indian Christ, Indian King*, chap. 1 *passim*.

40. I refer here to Fuensalida and Orbita's apparent choice of 1618—the initial year of Katun 3 Ahau—to attempt to convert Can Ek at Tah Itza (see Chapter 5) and to Avendaño's intellectual game with Can Ek in 1696 over the significance and timing of the unfolding of Katun 8 Ahau (see Chapter 9).

41. Scholes and Thompson, "The Francisco Pérez Probanza;" Jones, "The Last Maya Frontiers."

42. Roys, *The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel*, pp. 153–54; Edmonson, *The Ancient Future of the Itza*, pp. 113–14.

43. AGI, México 360, Luís Sánchez de Aguilar *et al.*, to Governor (Marqués de Santo Floro) 20 Sept. 1638; Roys, *The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel*, p. 156.

44. Ralph L. Roys, *The Political Geography of the Yucatan Maya*, Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 613 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1957); Roys, "Personal Names of the Maya of Yucatan," Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 523, Contributions to American Anthropology and History 31 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1940), pp. 33–48.

45. Alfredo Barrera Vásquez *et al.*, *Diccionario maya Cordemex: maya-español, español-maya* (Mérida: Ediciones Cordemex), 1980.

2: CONQUEST AND RESISTANCE

1. France V. Scholes and Ralph L. Roys, *The Maya Chontal Indians of Acalan-Tixchel: A Contribution to the History and Ethnography of the Yucatan Peninsula*, Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 560 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1948), p. 385. This passage is from AGI, México 138, "Merits and services of Don Palo Paxbolon, a descendant of the rulers of Acalan, and of his Spanish son-in-law, Francisco Maldonado," 17 Oct. 1614.

2. Robert S. Chamberlain, *The Conquest and Colonization of Yucatan, 1517–1550*, Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 582 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1948).

3. Gonzálo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, *Historia general y natural de las Indias*, vol. 3, Biblioteca de autores españoles desde la formación del lenguaje hasta nuestros días, vol. 111 (Madrid: Atlas, 1959), Bk. 32, Ch. 3. The 1528 voyage is described in Bk. 32, Ch. 3, and the foundation of Villa Real at Chetumal in Bk. 33, Ch. 6–8. Dávila's own account of his later *entrada* into Cochua, Uaymil, and Chetumal and his establishment and abandonment of Villa Real is found in his "Relación de lo sucedido a Alonso Dávila," in *Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y colonización de las antiguas posesiones españolas en América y Oceanía*, vol. 14 (Madrid), pp. 97–128. A somewhat embellished account of these events may be found in Chamberlain, *Conquest and Colonization*, pp. 60–65.

4. Salamanca was most likely located at Punta Soliman, two kms south of Xelha. See E. Wyllys Andrews IV and Anthony P. Andrews, *A Preliminary Study of the Ruins of Xcaret, Quintana Roo, Mexico*, Middle American Research Institute, Publication 40 (New Orleans: Tulane University, 1975), pp. 95–97.

5. Oviedo, *Historia general*, Bk. 32, Ch. 3.

6. Diego López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán* (Madrid: J. García Infanzón, 1688 [1654]), Bk. 1, Ch. 8.

7. Roys wrote that Guerrero "became a slave of Nachan Can, the ruler of Chetumal, but he married the latter's daughter and became war chief. He bitterly resisted Montejo's expedition, and Chamberlain has found a report that he was later killed in Honduras, where he had come with a fleet of fifty war canoes to fight the Spaniards. I believe that Nachan Can had a factory and commercial interests on the Ulua River, where this occurred." Ralph L. Roys, *The Political Geography of the Yucatan Maya*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 613 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1957), p. 162.

8. Oviedo, *Historia general*, Bk. 32, Ch. 3.

9. Ibid. Xamanha has been identified as Playa del Carmén (Andrews and Andrews, *A Preliminary Study*, p. 75).

10. Luján's information as interpreted by Oviedo, *Historia general*, Bk. 32, Ch. 6–8; and Dávila, "Relación." The following section is based entirely on these sources, which will not be further cited.

11. Luján was deeply impressed by the honey industry at Chetumal, which he described as follows (Oviedo, *Historia general*, Bk. 32, Ch. 6):

There they found much and very good honey and one to two thousand large hives, well built in tree trunks with their feeding holes and entrances. The enterprise and trade in honey is considerable there, and [the honey] is as good as Castille's in color and flavor, but the wax is black like jet. It is worth noting the shape of these hives, because each one is as long as a man's extended arm or at least as thick as his waist, and they are laid out along the ground. They have a stone closing up each end, well cemented over. The bees come and go above and along the sides of the stones into a nest that is in the middle of the hive in its upper part. Between one stone and the center—or from the said nest—they work to make the honeycombs with well-ordered cells. From these the honey drops into the other half of the vessel. It falls in balls of wax, which are filled with honey. Most of the wax remains in the other part of the hive. When they want to remove the honey or cut the combs from any of the hives, they open the right hand end where the balls are. They puncture them with a hole as thick or thin as they want so that the stream of honey will run out. It comes out that way and is very beautiful, flavorful, and clean, without any wax, as if it had been passed through a very clean strainer. It is very impressive to see and contemplate, and there is a much space devoted to the honey in that land, especially there.

The bees are the shape and size of those in Castille, except that they are white in color and very tame, such that they do not run away or behave harmfully. When you take one between your fingers and rub it, it smells very good. The hive's container, as I said, is a piece of a tree hollowed out on the inside. They leave it whole like the outside of a drum, and after it has been shaped it is as thin as a little finger, or as they want to have it. On the outside without cutting into it they carve scroll-work and leafy designs in relief. Each container and hive has engraved on it the mark or symbol of the lord who is its keeper.

There are also large orchards of mamey and cacao, which is a fruit like an almond and which serves as money (the reader may see book VII, chapter XXX for more detail) and houses well provided with these and other fruits of the land.

12. A "tiro de ballesta," referring literally to the distance covered by the arrow shot from a crossbow, must have referred to a generally understood estimate of distance. The distance of two "tiros de ballesta" is later applied (see below) to the width of a lake north of Lake Xoca.

13. AGS, Estado 7607, Mapas, Planos, y Deseños IV-24, Plano que demuestra la villa vieja de Salamanca de Vacalar arruinado . . . , 1726. This map is published in José Antonio Calderón Quijano, *Cartografía de Belice y Yucatán* (Sevilla:

Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1978), fig. 1; however, it is poorly reproduced. Roys believed that Mazanahau was near Yumpeten on the northern end of Lake Bacalar (*Political Geography*, pp. 157–58). This location, however, does not take into account the fact that Mazanahau was a port from which canoes traveled directly to Chetumal on the coast (see further discussion below).

14. Joaquin Hübbe and Andrés Aznar Pérez, "Karte der halbinsel Yucatán, hauptsächlich nach der von Joachim Hübbe und Andrés Aznar Pérez, zusammengestellten und von C. Hermann Berendt, revidirten und vermehrten, Mapa de la Peninsula de Yucatan, von 1878," in *Geographische Mittheilungen* (Gotha: Justus Perthes, 1879), tafel 11. This map is similar to the same authors' "Mapa de la península de Yucatán y Campeche, compilado por Joaquin Hübbe y Andrés Aznar Pérez y revisado y aumentado con datos importantes por C. Hermann Berendt (Paris: Régnier, 1878). The German version will be cited throughout this text.

15. AGI, Documentos Escogidos 172, Avisos del . . . Fray Francisco de Toral, primero obispo de Yucatán, Cozumel, y Tabasco del consejo de su magestad para los padres, curas, y vicarios de este obispado y para los que en su ausencia quedan en las iglesias, n.d. (about 1562). Originally part of AGI, México 369, this document has been published as Document 18 in France V. Scholes, Carlos R. Menéndez, J. Ignacio Rubio Mañé, Eleanor B. Adams, eds., *Documentos para la historia de Yucatán*, vol. 2, *La iglesia en Yucatán* (Mérida: Compañía Tipográfica Yucateca, 1938).

16. J. Eric S. Thompson, "A Proposal for Constituting a Maya Subgroup, Cultural and Linguistic, in the Petén and Adjacent Regions," in Grant D. Jones, ed., *Anthropology and History in Yucatán* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), pp. 11, 32, 36.

17. AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 304B, Probanza of Melchor Pacheco, 9 Aug. 1560, in Don Pedro Fernández de Castro con Melchor y Alonso Pacheco, Juan de Magaña Pacheco, y Luis Rosado, todos encomenderos de esta provincia de Yucatán, sobre la posesión de la cuarta parte de la provincia de Hocaba y Tamucui, que vacó por muerte de Doña Isabel de Lara, 1597.

18. Lopez de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 3, Ch. 15.

19. AGI, Escribanía de Cámara, Probanza of Melchor Pacheco, 1570–1571, in Don Pedro Fernández de Castro et al., 1597.

20. Gaspar Pacheco had come to the Indies in 1526 from the villa of Alcázar, while Melchor may have arrived as late as 1538 (AGI 304B, Probanza of Melchor Pacheco el mozo, 9 Jan. 1597, and Probanza of Melchor Pacheco, 1566; in D. Pedro Fernández de Castro et al., 1597.). He must have been at least fifty-one years old in 1544.

21. Translated in Chamberlain, *Conquest and Colonization*, p. 235. The original letter from Bienvenida to Felipe II, dated 10 Feb. 1548, is published in *Cartas de Indias* (Madrid: Ministerio de Fomento, Imprenta de Manuel G. Hernández, 1877), pp. 70–82.

22. On Bienvenida see Lino Gómez Canedo, "Fray Lorenzo de Bienvenida y

los orígenes de las misiones de Yucatán (1537–1564),” *Revista de la Universidad de Yucatán* 18 (1976), p. 55; Bernardo de Lizana, *Historia de Yucatán: Devocionario de Nuestra Señora de Izamal y conquista espiritual*, 2nd ed. (México: Museo Nacional, 1893 [1633]; López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 5, Ch. 1.

23. Diego de Landa, *Landa’s Relación de las cosas de Yucatan*, ed. and trans. Alfred M. Tozzer (Cambridge: Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, 1941), pp. 60–61. Despite his presumed innocence with regard to the Pachecos’ behavior, Montejo was nonetheless later held ultimately responsible for the excesses committed during the conquest of these provinces (AGI, México 359, Capítulos puestos a Don Francisco de Montejo . . . por los moradores de Mérida de Yucatán, sobre varios excesos que había cometido, 1544; AGI, Justicia 300, no. 3, ramo 2, Relación de la residencia del adelantado Francisco de Montejo como gobernador de Yucatán, por el doctor Blas Cota, 1549).

24. López de Cogolludo stated that the Pachecos sent their report on the founding of Salamanca de Bacalar to Montejo in 1545 (*Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 3, Ch. 15). He noted elsewhere, however, that the church was built in 1544 (Bk. 4, Ch. 16).

25. Chamberlain, *Conquest and Colonization*, pp. 232–35.

26. Probanza of Melchor Pacheco, 1570–1571.

27. Chamberlain, *Conquest and Colonization*, p. 232.

28. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 3, Ch. 15.

29. AGI, México 3048, Conducta de capitán a Juan de Aguilar por Francisco de Montejo, capitán general, 13 Feb. 1547, in Probanza de los servicios y méritos y servicios del capitán Juan de Aguilar y de los de Antón Julian, su suegro, 1566.

30. AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 304B, Probanza of Melchor Pacheco, 1566, in Don Pedro Fernández de Castro et al., 1597.

31. Memoria de los conventos, vicarías y pueblos que hay en esta gobernación de Yucatán, Cozumel y Tabasco, 1582, in France V. Scholes et al., *Documentos*, vol. 2, p. 63.

32. Relación de los conquistadores y pobladores que había en la provincia de Yucatán, en la ciudad de Mérida, 25 June 1551, in *Colección de documentos inéditos del Archivo de Indias*, series 1, vol. 14 (Madrid, 1870), p. 192.

33. AGI, México 374, Memorial para informar al Real Consejo . . . , by Bishop Fray Gegorio de Montalvo, 1582; published in Scholes et al., *Documentos*, vol. 2, p. 81.

34. Chamberlain, *Conquest and Colonization*, pp. 239–52.

35. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 6.

36. AGI, Patronato 69, ramo 1, no. 10, Información de servicios hechos . . . por Juan Garzón sobre que se le den por armas un escudo que representa, 1569. This thirty-one-folio *expediente* comprises an undated petition by Juan de Aldaz on behalf of Juan Garzón, including a summary *relación* of the three *entradas*; a letter from the *cabildo* of Bacalar to the king, dated 4 Jan. 1569; and Garzón’s *probanza* with supporting Bacalar witnesses, dated 7 Jan. 1569. Un-

less otherwise indicated, the information presented in this section is derived from this document.

37. Probanza de Juan de Aguilar, 1566.

38. AGI, Justicia 253, pieza 4, Residencia tomada a Don Luis Céspedes de Oviedo en Bacalar, 1569, in Residencia que Don Diego Santillan . . . tomó a Don Luis Céspedes de Oviedo del tiempo que fue gobernador de dichas provincias, 1569. Hereinafter this document will be cited as Residencia de Bacalar, with a corrected date of 1571. In part of this document (Rodrigo de Escalona contra Juan Garzón, 14 March 1571) Garzón was charged with committing offences "against the natives in the Indian towns in these provinces" (i.e., northern Yucatan) and against the Spaniards in Valladolid, from whom he took maize and other supplies "against their will and without paying for them."

39. Three Franciscans were in Bacalar during 1568–1569, apparently brought with Garzón under the terms of the permission granted to him to pursue these entradas. These are discussed in chapter 4.

40. The Garzón expediente (Información de servicios hechos . . . por Juan Garzón, 1569) mentions Diego de Riveros by name in connection with this incident. His holdings are substantiated in AGI, México 1952, Cédula confirming the encomienda of Chanlacan and Yumpeten in Juan Sánchez de Aguilar, 16 Oct. 1630. Riveros probably succeeded to this encomienda following the murder of Martín Rodríguez in 1547; he was nearly seventy years old at the time of these events. More information on this individual may be found in Chapter 3.

41. Auto by Juan Garzón, 13 Sept. 1568, in Residencia de Bacalar, 1571.

42. Rodrigo de Escalona contra Juan Garzón, 14 March 1571, in Residencia de Bacalar, 1571.

43. Sara Miller, "Francisco Palomino: Royal 'Protector and Defender' of Yucatecan Indians, 1569–1586," *Mesoamérica* 6, no. 9 (1985): 133–53.

3: SALAMANCA DE BACALAR

1. AGI, Contaduría 913, Statement by Julio Sarmiento Palacio and royal accountant Gil Carrillo, appended to Bacalar accounts, 4 March 1620.

2. For examples see Marshall Sahlins, *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981), and Renato Rosaldo, *Ilongot Headhunting 1883–1974: A Study in Society and History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980).

3. Residencia de Bacalar, 1571.

4. AGI, México 99, Probanza en nombre de la villa de Salamanca de Bacalar, 21 April 1570.

5. Probanza of Melchor Pacheco, 1566. See also Relación de los conquistadores y pobladores que había en la provincia de Yucatán, en la ciudad de Mérida, 15 June 1551, in *Colección de documentos inéditos del Archivo de Indias*, p. 193.

6. Probanza del capitán Juan de Aguilar y de Antón Julian, 1566.
7. Conducta de capitán a Juan de Aguilar, 13 Feb. 1547.
8. For sources on Bienvenida see Chapter 2, note 22.
9. Relación de los conquistadores y pobladores, p. 195.
10. Probanza of Melchor Pacheco, 1566. For reference to his Cozumel-Pole holdings, see the 1549 tax list, interpreted in Manuel Cristina García Bernal, *Población y Encomienda en Yucatán bajo los Austrias*, Publicaciones de la Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos de Sevilla, no. 252 (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos de Sevilla, 1978), pp. 32–44.
11. AGI, México 360, Marqués de Santo Floro to Crown, 7 Feb. 1643; AGI, México 369, Bishop of Yucatan to Crown, 5 March 1643.
12. France V. Scholes and J. Eric S. Thompson, "The Francisco Pérez *Probanza* and the *Matrícula* of Tipu," in Grant D. Jones, ed., *Anthropology and History in Yucatán* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977).
13. AGI, México 924, Méritos y servicios de Juan del Castillo y Toledo y Juan Castillo del Arrúe, 1717, f. 1053–1207.
14. AGI, Contaduría 920, Razón y certificación de todas calidades de gentes . . . en esta villa de Salamana [sic] de Bacalar, y su jurisdicción, 25 March 1688, in Cuaderno 1 of Matrícula de los pueblos de la provincia, 1688.
15. Plano de Salamanca de Bacalar, 1726.
16. AGI, México 3017, Governor to Crown, 12 May 1729; Hostilidad executada contra los ingleses cortadores de palo de tinta de los Ríos Hondo, Nuevo, Laguna [sic] y Cayos de su costa desde el día 1° de abril de 1729 hasta el 9 de junio siguiente, comandante el Capn. Dⁿ Antonio de Figueroa; and Governor to Crown, 2 Aug. 1729 (2 letters). See also Peter Gerhard, *The Southeast Frontier of New Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 73.
17. Plano de Salamanca de Vacalar, 1726.
18. Joaquin Hübbe and Andrés Aznar Pérez, "Karte der Halbinsel Yucatan . . . ," in *Geographische Mitteilungen*, tafel 11 (Gotha: Justus Perthes, 1879). Anthony P. Andrews (personal communication, 22 July 1988) doubts, however, that Río Indio was ever connected to Chetumal Bay.
19. Plano de Salamanca de Vacalar, 1726.
20. AGS, Estado 7607, Diario y relación del viaje de Alejandro Joseph Güelles a la villa vieja de Bacalar, 28 June 1726. The distance from the coast is cited by Güelles and was based on statements by his informants.
21. See discussion of Tamalcab in Appendix.
22. Diego López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán* (Madrid: J. García Infanzón, 1688), Bk. 9, Ch. 5.
23. Plano de Salamanca de Vacalar, 1726.
24. Ibid.
25. See discussion of the location of Chetumal in Appendix.
26. Plano de Salamanca de Vacalar, 1726.
27. Marqués de Santo Floro to Crown, 7 Feb. 1643. Here Chinam is identified

as Punta de Chiname, the last identified point of land on a route from the south to Bacalar via the Río Hondo.

28. Plano . . . de Salamanca de Vacalar, 1726.

29. Anthony P. Andrews (personal communication, 22 July 1988) suggests that San Juan Extramuros was probably on the lakeshore south of the eighteenth-century fort, where heavy prehispanic and colonial middens have been found.

30. Diario y relación del viaje de Alejandro Joseph Güelles, 28 June 1726.

31. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 4, ch. 16. For 1639 see Francisco de Cárdenas Valencia, *Relación historial eclesiástica de la provincia de Yucatán de la Nueva España escrita en el año de 1639* (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1937), p. 95.

32. Probanza de Bacalar, 21 April 1570. There is also a reference to this fire in Residencia de Bacalar, 1571.

33. AGI, México 359, Governor to Crown, 19 Jan. 1599.

34. Cárdenas Valencia, *Relación historial*, p. 95.

35. Diario y relación del viaje de Alejandro Joseph Güelles, 1726.

36. AGI, México 1031, El arzobispo obispo de Yucatán da cuenta de los curatos que ha visitado, y el estado de cada uno . . . , 26 Oct. 1755.

37. Alberto Escalona Ramos, "Algunas construcciones de tipo colonial en Quintana Roo," *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas*, vol. 3, no. 10 (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1943), pp. 17–40. He provided a sketch plan of this church, which he described as follows (pp. 21, 25):

El pequeño templo de Bacalar, hoy cubierto por la vegetación, está en ruinas; carece de techo.

Pertenece al grupo que hemos clasificado como de tipo II o sea los que no tienen contrafuertes. Se compone de un recinto doble, que mide en total 19.50 x 7.30 m. El menor de ellos, que debió servir de sacristía, está en la parte posterior y tiene 3 m. de ancho interiormente; una puerta de 1.50 m. de ancho da acceso a él y otra de 0.80 m. lo comunica con la iglesia (el muro divisorio está muy destruído). Esta ocupa el resto de la construcción; tiene tres puertas hacia el exterior: una de cada lado (la del sur está clausurada); la del frente mide 2.30 m. y las otras 1.50 m. El ancho de los muros es 0.75 m.

La puerta de la sacristía tiene en la parte alta un adorno en forma de concha hecha de estuco.

La fachada tiene un remate para campanario que con la cruz (hoy perdida) debió tener unos 4.50 m. de alto. El muro tiene más o menos 5.50 m. de altura. Dicho remate tiene un perfil que recuerda el de las esteras enrolladas.

El marco pétreo de la puerta, que es rectangular, tiene una clave trapezoidal con un adorno simple parecido a una vela ardiendo.

38. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 5.

39. Residencia de Bacalar, 1571.

40. Diario y relación del viaje de Alejandro Joseph Güelles, 1526.

41. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 6.
42. Plano de Salamanca de Vacalar, 1726. The salt sources are discussed in AGI, Justicia 251, Juan Pérez de Tordesillas to Governor, undated, in *Proceso contra Hernando Dorado, 1564–1565*. See also Anthony P. Andrews, *Maya Salt Production and Trade* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1983), p. 46–7.
43. Probanza de Bacalar, 21 April 1570.
44. AGI, Contaduría 912, 913.
45. Residencia de Bacalar, 1571.
46. AGI, México 158, Méritos y servicios del capitán Francisco Pérez, 1661.
47. García Bernal, *Población y encomienda*, pp. 94–95.
48. Razón y certificación, 1688.
49. AGI, Contaduría 913.
50. AGI, México 360, Governor to Crown, 10 July 1638.
51. Razón y certificación, 1688.
52. A mulatto named Pedro Juan was living at Soite in 1630. AGI, México 912, Petición de Cristóbal Sánchez, 1631, f. 897r.
53. Razón y certificación, 1688.
54. The claim for no slaves is found in AGI, Justicia 253, Pesquisa secreta contra Juan Garzón, 6 April 1571, in Residencia de Bacalar, 1571, f. 1238v–42r. Witnesses for the *Pesquisa secreta contra alcaldes y regidores* in the Residencia de Bacalar reported one Black slave (f. 1164r, 1181v).
55. AGI, México 359, Bishop Fray Juan Izquierdo to Crown, 15 June 1599.
56. García Bernal, *Población y encomienda*, pp. 146–47. See also Sherburne F. Cook and Woodrow Borah, *Essays in Population History, Mexico and the Caribbean*, vol. 2 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 77–78.
57. AGI, Contaduría 912.
58. AGI, México 359, Governor Francisco Velázquez de Gijón to Crown, 24 March 1576. Technically, only two positions of regidor were filled by two individuals each.
59. AGI, México 148, ramo 1, no. 27, Title of the encomienda of Chanlacan and Yumpeten, in Juan Sánchez de Aguilar, 24 Nov. 1626.
60. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 8, Ch. 15.
61. Información de servicios hechos por Juan Garzón, 1569; Residencia de Bacalar, 1571, f. 1255ff.
62. This episode is documented in Juan Delgado contra Juan Garzón, in Residencia de Bacalar, 1571. The document contains an extract from the *libro de cabildo*, in which Garzón's order is recorded along with the results of the election.
63. AGI, México 242, Title of the encomienda of towns in the Bacalar province, in Diego Rodríguez, 25 June 1622.
64. AGI, Contaduría 913.
65. AGI, México 360. Governor to Crown, 20 July 1638.
66. Governor to Crown, 10 July 1638. The following case studies are from Residencia de Bacalar, 1571.

4: THE MAYA FRONTIER

1. Diego López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán* (Madrid: J. García Infanzón, 1688), Bk. 8, Ch. 9.

2. Ralph L. Roys, *The Political Geography of the Yucatan Maya*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 613 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1957), pp. 157–66. This delineation is also followed by Peter Gerhard in *The Southeast Frontier of New Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 67–69.

3. Chanlacan, which may well have been on Progreso Lagoon south of the mouth of the New River, was almost certainly part of the Chetumal province when it rebelled against the Bacalareños in 1547 (see Chapter 2 and Appendix). The case for including Lamanai on New River Lagoon as a subject town of Chetumal is far weaker, however.

4. This interpretation differs from that which I offered in an earlier statement (Grant D. Jones, "The Last Maya Frontiers of Colonial Yucatan," in Murdo J. MacLeod and Robert Wasserstrom, eds., *Spaniards and Indians in Southeastern Mesoamerica* [Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983], p. 66), from which this section is derived. At that time I had no direct evidence of the existence of Dzuluinicob.

5. J. Eric S. Thompson, "A Proposal for Constituting a Maya Subgroup, Cultural and Linguistic, in the Petén and Adjacent Regions," in Grant D. Jones, ed., *Anthropology and History in Yucatán* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), p. 3.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 11. The evidence for a "Putun-" or Chontal-speaking elite at Chetumal is weak, and Thompson's distinction between foreign rulers and local peasants likely overstates the degree of stratification that existed in this region at the time of contact.

8. I discussed Thompson's efforts to cope with regionality in more detail in "The Southern Maya Lowlands during Spanish Colonial Times," in Ronald Spores, ed., *Ethnohistory*. Supplement to the Handbook of Middle American Indians, vol. 4. Series edited by Victoria Reifler Bricker (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), pp. 74–77.

9. Gerhard, *The Southeast Frontier*, pp. 67–75.

10. Grant D. Jones, "Agriculture and Trade in the Colonial Period Southern Maya Lowlands," in Kent V. Flannery, ed., *Maya Subsistence: Studies in Memory of Dennis E. Puleston* (New York: Academic Press, 1981), pp. 275–93.

11. Roys, *Political Geography*, p. 162; France V. Scholes and Ralph L. Roys, *The Maya Chontal Indians of Acalan-Tixchel: A Contribution to the History and Ethnography of the Yucatan Peninsula*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 560 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1948), p. 385; see quotation at heading of Chapter 2.

12. Probanza of Juan de Aguilar, 1566. See Appendix.

13. Probanza of Melchor Pacheco, 1570–1571.

14. AGI, México 148, ramo 2, no. 35, Royal Officials of Yucatan *contra* Don Juan de Vargas, governor of Yucatan, 1630. See especially Fray Pedro de Mata to Juan de Zenos, 12 Nov. 1629, and Mata to Juan Ortiz Equiluz, 1 Nov. 1629. There is valuable documentation on the experiences of these runaways in AGI, México 909, Expediente sobre los indios que llegaron de La Pimienta Grande a los pueblos de Oxtutzcab, 1663, f. 1486v–1537.

15. Grant D. Jones, Don S. Rice, and Prudence M. Rice, "The Location of Tayasal: A Reconsideration in Light of Peten Ethnohistory and Archaeology," *American Antiquity* 46 (1981): 530–47.

16. For a discussion of the Acalan and Cehach regions see Scholes and Roys, *The Maya Chontal*, *passim*. Jones has treated the Acalan province in relation to the Itzas in "Agriculture and Trade," pp. 279–81.

17. Juan de Villagutierre Soto-Mayor, *Historia de la conquista de la provincia de el Itzá, reducción y progresos de la de el Lacandón*, Biblioteca "Goathemala" de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia, vol. 9 (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1933); translated as *History of the Conquest of the Province of the Itza*, trans. Robert D. Wood and ed. Frank E. Comparato (Culver City: Labyrinthos, 1983). A new edition of Villagutierre's work was recently published with the title, *Historia de la conquista de Itzá*, ed. Jesús María García Añooveros, Crónicas de América, no. 13 (Madrid: Historia 16, 1985). See also Francisco Ximénez, *Historia de la provincia de San Vicente de Chiapa y Guatemala*, Biblioteca "Goathemala" de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia, vols. 1–3, 24, 25 (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1929–1971); Ethel-Jane W. Bunting, "From Cahabon to Bacalar in 1677," *Maya Society Quarterly* 1 (1932): 112–19; Arden R. King, *Coban and the Verapaz: History and Cultural Process in Northern Guatemala*, Middle American Research Institute, Tulane University, Publication 37 (New Orleans: Tulane University, 1974); André Saint-Lu, *La Vera Paz, esprit évangélique et colonisation*, Thèses, Mémoires et Travaux, no. 10 (Paris: Centre de Recherches Hispaniques, Institut d'Etudes Hispaniques, 1968).

18. Gonzálo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, *Historia general y natural de las Indias*, vol. 3. Biblioteca de autores españoles desde la formación del lenguaje hasta nuestros días, vol. 111 (Madrid: Atlas, 1959), Bk. 32, Ch. 6.

19. Roys, *Political Geography*, p. 164. Sixteenth-century traders from Mani regularly brought clothing to Xoca, presumably in exchange for cacao (Residencia de Bacalar, 1571).

20. AGI, Justicia 248, Proceso contra Melchor y Francisco Pacheco por el doctor Quijada sobre decir haber hecho agravio a los indios de Hocaba de su encomienda y tratado y contratado con ellos, 1564, f. 3,021–22, 3,052, 3,069; see also Residencia de Bacalar, 1571.

21. Hernán Cortés, *Cartas de relación*, 9th ed. (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1976), p. 242. For another contemporary account of the 1525 journey across El Petén see Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *Historia verdadera de la conquista de Nueva España*, 7th ed. (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1977), tomo II, 338–57 (Ch. 177–78).

22. Cortés, *Cartas de relación*, pp. 242–43.

23. Memorial by Bishop Fray Gregorio de Montalvo, 1582, p. 81.

24. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 6.

25. Ibid., Bk. 9, Ch. 7.

26. Jones, "The Southern Maya Lowlands," pp. 282–84.

27. NL, Ayer Collection, Fray Andrés de Avendaño y Loyola, *Relación de las dos entradas que hize a la conversión de los gentiles Ytzaex y Cehaches*, 1696, f. 37r. Avendaño's account has been published in an older English translation as *Relation of Two Trips to Peten: Made for the Conversion of the Heathen Ytzaex and Cehaches*, trans. Charles P. Bowditch and Guillermo Rivera and ed. Frank P. Comparato (Culver City, CA: Labyrinthos, 1987). For the convenience of readers, I shall primarily cite the English translation, which is generally reliable.

The passage referring to Itza trade with Tipu (from the English version, pp. 41–42) is as follows:

there is a great deal of cotton, cochineal, indigo, which accounts for the abundance of clothing they have and which they give to the Cehache Indians and those from Tipú in barter for hachets [sic] and machetes; and all this woven very neatly in a variety of colors of cotton thread; and the said clothing is very durable, since it is like felt, although the colors of their cloth are not very permanent, from their not knowing how to give it the finishing touch.

28. AGI, Guatemala 151B, pieza 2, Junta de Guerra, 12 march 1697, f. 16r–25v.

29. J. Eric S. Thompson, *Maya History and Religion* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970), pp. 306–07.

30. Scholes and Roys, *The Maya Chontal*, p. 57.

31. Jones, "The Southern Maya Lowlands," p. 284.

32. See Thompson's discussion and illustrations of "Lacandon-type incense burners" in his "A Proposal for Constituting a Maya Subgroup," pp. 30–33, 41–42, and Plates 1–1 to 1–10. Similar censers and other colonial-period ceramic ritual objects have been documented archaeologically at Tipu and Lamanai.

33. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 8, Ch. 9.

34. Kin Kuyok and Batab Yam, important Cehach leaders in the 1660s, made their male followers wear the "kube," (*k'ub*), which was presumably similar to the dress of the modern Yucatec-speaking Lacandon Mayas (*Relación de todo lo que ha pasado y pasa en el pueblo de San Antonio de Sahcabchen*, 1669; see note 37, Ch. 1).

35. See the excellent discussions of maestros cantores in Nancy M. Farriss, *Maya Society under Colonial Rule: The Collective Enterprise of Survival* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 335–43 and Anne C. Collins, "The Maestros Cantores in Yucatán," in Grant D. Jones, ed., *Anthropology and History in Yucatán* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), pp. 233–247.

36. These are only a few of the responsibilities of the maestros; see other examples and a discussion of their elite and bicultural characteristics in Farriss, *Maya Society*, pp. 335–36, 341.

37. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 7.

38. Ibid.

39. See Farriss, *Maya Society*, pp. 231–37, for a discussion of the native cabil-dos in Yucatan and their presumed pre-Columbian antecedents.

40. Pacha had a regidor named Fernando Uh in 1655. Méritos y servicios del capitán Francisco Pérez, 1661.

41. Thompson, *Maya History and Religion*, pp. 48–83.

42. For a discussion of epidemics in Yucatán see Farriss, *Maya Society*, pp. 57–63.

43. In 1622 the combined vacant encomienda of Pacha, Mazanahau, Punquy, Chinam, and Tipu paid an annual rent of nine cargas of *cacao*. This Mazanahau (as distinguished from that encountered by Dávila, which I believe was the later crown pueblo of Mazanila) was apparently located in Belize, as was Chinam. To confuse matters further, this Tipu was apparently a reduction community near Bacalar, perhaps near the mouth of the New River in Belize (see discussion below). See Title of the encomienda of towns in the Bacalar province, 25 June 1622.

44. AGI, Contaduría 911, 912. These records record the *tercio* payment (one-third the total value) forwarded to the royal officials. For these years the actual *tercio* payment was two cargas, twelve zontles, yielding a total tribute of six cargas thirty-six zontles, or slightly more than six and one-half cargas.

45. AGI, México 1841, Minuta de los encomenderos de esta provincia y la renta que cada uno tiene, 1606; this includes a list of crown encomiendas and their value.

46. AGI, Contaduría 912, 913, 914.

47. AGI, Contaduría 913.

48. It might be argued on the same grounds that the tribute was six zontles, not twelve, which would double the reconstructed population figures in the table.

49. Manuela Cristina García Bernal, *Población y encomienda en Yucatán bajo los Austrias*. Publicaciones de la Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos de Sevilla, no. 252 (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos de Sevilla, 1978), p. 95.

50. AGI, Contaduría 913.

51. AGI, México 364, Testimonio del valor de los diezmos comunes del año 1596, 24 Jan. 1598.

52. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 7.

53. A family of Tipu runaways or rebels had apparently earlier been collected elsewhere, constituting part of an encomienda vacancy announced in 1619 following the death of Inés de Contreras on 26 March 1618 (AGI, Contaduría 913). Contreras had held Chinam (in northernmost Belize) and "Tipu" (perhaps joined with the population of Chinam) in encomienda at the time of her death, and the value of the encomienda amounted to only one and one-third cargas of cacao. Of this amount the value of the "Tipu" tributes seems to have been only five pesos, slightly less than the value of fourteen zontles of cacao.

This would signify only a single tribute payer. Chinam itself, with a tribute of about sixty-six zontles, would have constituted only about five families.

54. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 10, Ch. 2.

55. Bishop of Yucatan to Crown, 5 March 1643.

56. AGI, México 158, Matrícula of Chunukum, 6 Nov. 1655, in Méritos y servicios del capitán Francisco Pérez, 1661. This matrícula was transcribed by Scholes and Thompson as the "matrícula of Tipu" in "The Francisco Pérez *Probanza*," pp. 58–64. The census was taken at Chunukum, not Tipu, thus accounting for my designation.

57. AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 321A, pieza 3, Residencia del general Don Antonio de Layseca Alvarado, por Don Juan Bruno Tello de Guzman, 1683.

58. AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 1, no. 11, Martín de Ursúa y Arismendi to Pedro Perrera, Captain General of Guatemala, 12 June 1697; AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 339B, pieza 18, Declaración del bachiller Don Gaspar de Guemes, que el fue el superior o vicario de los otros sacerdotes, que salieron cuando se dice que vino un embajador, 29 Nov. 1703.

59. Lamanai was valued at fifty-three pesos, five tomines, suggesting a population of twenty-one tributaries (at two and one-half pesos per tributary) or about seventy-two individuals (AGI, Contaduría 915A).

60. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 5–13; Bk. 11, Ch. 12–17.

61. See discussion of map locations of Lamanai in David M. Pendergast, "Under Spanish Rule: The Final Chapter in Lamanai's Maya History," *Belcast Journal of Belizean Affairs* 3, no. 1–2 (1986): 1–7.

62. Farriss, *Maya Society*, pp. 72–79, 199–223; see also her "Nucleation versus Dispersal: The Dynamics of Population Movement in Colonial Yucatan," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 58 (1978): 187–216.

63. Farriss, *Maya Society*, p. 200.

64. *Ibid.*, p. 206.

65. *Ibid.*, pp. 206–14.

5: KATUN 3 AHAU: RECONQUEST AND RESISTANCE

1. Bernardo de Lizana, *Historia de Yucatán: Devocionario de Nuestra Señora de Izamal y conquista espiritual* (1633), 2nd ed. (México: Museo Nacional, 1893), p. 115.

2. For a discussion of the location of Tah Itza see Grant D. Jones, Don S. Rice, and Prudence M. Rice, "The Location of Tayasal: A Reconsideration in Light of Peten Ethnohistory and Archaeology," *American Antiquity* 46 (1981): 530–47.

3. Victoria Reifler Bricker, *The Indian Christ, The Indian King: The Historical Substrate of Maya Myth and Ritual* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 21–24; Juan de Villagutierre Soto-Mayor, *Historia de la conquista de la provincia de el Itzá*,

reducción y progresos de la de el Lacandón. Biblioteca "Goathemala" de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia, vol. 9 (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1933).

4. This discussion of Argüelles's activities is based on Diego López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán* (Madrid: J. García Infanzón, 1688), Bk. 8, Ch. 8.

5. France V. Scholes and Ralph L. Roys, *The Maya Chontal Indians of Acalan-Tixchel: A Contribution to the History and Ethnography of the Yucatan Peninsula*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 560 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1948), pp. 251–98.

6. AGI, México 138, Paxbolon-Maldonado Papers, parts I, II. These remarkable documents form the basis for much of Scholes and Roys' important monograph, *The Maya Chontal*. See also note 1, Ch. 2.

7. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 8, Ch. 9.

8. Ibid.

9. Scholes and Roys, *The Maya Chontal*, p. 253.

10. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 8, Ch. 9.

11. Scholes and Roys, *The Maya Chontal*, pp. 260–75.

12. Ibid., p. 280.

13. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 8, Ch. 9.

14. Scholes and Roys, *The Maya Chontal*, p. 251.

15. Ibid., pp. 287–89, 340.

16. AGI, México 294, Méritos y servicios de Antonio de Arroyo, clérigo presbitero beneficiado del partido de Petu, 1604.

17. AGI, Contaduría 912.

18. AGI, México 359, Certification by Francisco de Sanabria, 2 June 1608.

19. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 8, Ch. 15; Scholes and Roys, *The Maya Chontal*, p. 281.

20. Scholes and Roys, however, indicate that Matías was in fact attacked by a "group of fugitives" (*The Maya Chontal*, p. 281).

21. AGI, México 148, ramo 1, no. 27, Juan Sánchez de Aguilar suplica se le de confirmación de los pueblos de Chanlacan y Yumpeten, 1630.

22. Title of the encomienda of towns in the Bacalar province, 1622. The date given for this reduction was fourteen years before 1622, i.e., 1608.

23. Bricker, *Indian Christ, Indian King*, 21.

24. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, ch. 2.

25. Villagutierre Soto-Mayor, *Historia de la conquista*, Bk. 2, ch. 1.

26. Lizana, *Historia de Yucatán*, p. 115.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid., p. 113.

30. Bricker, *Indian Christ, Indian King*, p. 21; Munro S. Edmonson, *The Ancient Future of the Itza: The Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), pp. 103–06.

31. López de Cogolludo (*Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 4–13) may have introduced some confusion into his account due to his own experiences in the

Bacalar province on two separate trips to Guatemala, one of them in the late 1630s. He had followed the same route to Bacalar and was familiar with the area around New River Lagoon (Bk. 9, Ch. 5–6).

32. Ibid., Bk. 9, Ch. 4.

33. Ibid., Bk. 9, Ch. 5.

34. Ibid., Bk. 9, Ch. 17.

35. The overland route to Tipu and the natural bridge on Labouring Creek was described in greater detail by Francisco de Cárdenas Valencia (*Relación històrial eclesiástica de la provincia de Yucatán de la Nueva España escrita en el año de 1639* (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1937), pp. 95–96.

when the poor cleric goes to minister to them, after having disembarked from a canoe in which he has crossed over a river, with enough danger to his life, he then suffers a new task, walking on foot through muddy stretches and marshes (where in some parts the water reaches up to the belt) for a distance of eighteen leagues. After that he later commences to wade across a river, unnavigable due to the strength of its currents. It would be impossible for him to cross it, being on foot, if our Lord God had not been disposed in His providence to provide a remedy, which goes all the way across, creating in it a stone positioned north-south (as was needed for this crossing), one-half a *cuadra* long and two palms wide on the surface that it offers, across which, keeping close grip with a staff in one's hands, that river is crossed with sufficient danger. Even greater is the danger at the end of the crossing, because the stone stops before the end is reached, whereupon the river passes unobstructed. In order to reach the bank there are four *brazas* of very deep water, such that one cannot pass except by wings. But Our Lord, who provided the first remedy, also provided the second, ordering that that said stone should have, as it has, at its end a crevice or deep hole in which a thick timber is tightly wedged, and later they tie across it two other logs, which with their points reach the bank where the river ends, and across which one passes until reaching safety. . . . [After all this he must go by canoe and paddle for six days up a river that has more than 190 rapids in its ascent before arriving at Tipu, fifty leagues from the villa.]

Fuendalida's *relación* also specified 190 rapids on the upstream route to Tipu (López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 6).

36. This phrase, added by López de Cogolludo, refers to the visit of the Itza representatives to Mérida in 1616 or 1617. It makes no reference, however, to a prior visit by Orbita to Tah Itza.

37. One might well wonder why the Tipuans decided to take the party across Lake Yaxha in canoes rather than to lead them around the shore of the lake. It is possible that they were avoiding settlements on the shore, where activities not appropriate for the eyes of Franciscan missionaries might have been taking place.

38. At a later point López de Cogolludo (*Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 10) states that they named the town San Pablo de Itza, choosing San Pablo as its patron. It may not have been a coincidence that when Martín de Ursúa's troops were sailing toward Tah Itza on the morning of 13 March 1697 "there was seen on the waves made by the water coming toward the ship a picture or effigy on paper, about six fingers wide, of the glorious apostle Saint Paul. It was taken from the water and given to General Ursua, and because of this remarkable occurrence the galliot was given the name of Saint Paul" (Villagutierre Soto-Mayor, *History of the Conquest*, p. 294). In recognition of this sign Ursúa named the Spanish town on the ruins of Tah Itza in honor both of his own patroness, Nuestra Señora de los Remedios, and San Pablo. While the picture of the saint may not have been one left by Fuensalida and Orbita, the recognition of San Pablo at Tah Itza appears to have been kept alive during the intervening years.

39. The stones are mentioned in López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 12. These, along with the figurines and clothing, Fuensalida presented to the church officials in Mérida. They "were greatly valued by them but are not valued by us; although, as the religious said, they might have been cures for different ailments." These must have been pieces of jade jewelry, but none of these wise men seemed to have realized the meaning and value of such a gift.

40. Apparently from *xol op*, or rotten anona (*Annona cherimola*), suggesting an epithet rather stronger than that signified in this text (see Alfredo Barrera Vásquez et al., *Diccionaria maya Cordemex: maya-español, español-maya* (Mérida: Ediciones Cordemex, 1980), pp. 606, 950). The anona is known as custard apple in English.

41. López de Cogolludo devoted an entire chapter to a rich, detailed description of this city-wide religious ritual (*Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 11).

42. J. Eric S. Thompson ("A Proposal for Constituting a Maya Subgroup, Cultural and Linguistic, in the Petén and Adjacent Regions," in Grant D. Jones, ed., *Anthropology and History in Yucatán* [Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977], pp. 12–13) discussed the location and characteristics of the Chinamita, for which Fuensalida's relación was López de Cogolludo's source (see *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 14).

43. Ibid.

6: KATUN 3 AHAU: MURDER IN THE CHAPEL

1. AGI, México 246, Undated letter (1624) from Agustín Zima, Sebastián Dzib, and Diego Yam to Diego Cay of San Felipe de Sacalum, in Méritos y servicios de Juan Bernardo Casanova, 1627. This letter is discussed later in this chapter.

2. Properly cited as the British Museum's Egerton Manuscript 1791, Francisco de Cárdenas Valencia's manuscript, *Relación historial eclesiástica de la provincia de Yucatán de la Nueva España escrita en el año de 1639* (México: Editorial Porrúa)

was published in 1937 (see p. 58–9 for information on the Mirones *entrada*). Some information from this source, not included in the extract published by Scholes and Adams, will be cited in this chapter.

The full citations of the AGI document published by Scholes and Adams ("Documents Relating to the Mirones Expedition to the Interior of Yucatan, 1621–1624," *Maya Research* 3 [1936–1937], 153–76, 251–76), also consulted in the original for this chapter, are as follows (with the corresponding pages in "Documents" indicated in parentheses following the citations):

AGI, México 141, Documentos respectivos al servicio que prometió hacer a S.M. del capn. Francisco Mirones y Lezcano, residente in Mérida, 1621–1623 (including Petition of Francisco Mirones y Lezcano, 9 Nov. 1621); Auto by Governor Diego de Cárdenas, 12 Nov. 1621 (160–73);

AGI, México 141, Diego de Cárdenas to Crown, 27 Jan. 1622 (173–74);

AGI, México 141, Francisco Mirones y Lezcano to Crown, 7 Feb. 1622; patent of Diego de Cárdenas to Francisco Mirones y Lezcano, 12 Nov. 1621 (174–76);

AGI, México 141, Diary of Francisco Mirones y Lezcano, 9 March 1622–31 May 1622 (also containing Diego de Cárdenas to Francisco Mirones y Lezcano, 19 March 1622 and *auto* of same date) (251–71);

AGI, México 145, Petition by Francisco Camul, governor of Oxkutzcab et al., with *auto* by Diego de Cárdenas, 1624 (272–76).

3. Diego López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán* (Madrid: J. García Infanzón, 1688), Bk. 10, Ch. 2–3.

4. France V. Scholes and Ralph L. Roys, *The Maya Chontal Indians of Acalan-Tixchel: A Contribution to the History and Ethnography of the Yucatan Peninsula*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 560 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1948), pp. 285–86, note 71.

5. AGI, México 138, Información y memorial de Don Francisco Sánchez Cerdán, 26 Feb. 1615. This document is part of the Paxbolon-Maldonado papers.

6. Cárdenas Valencia, *Relación historial*, 76; López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 10, Ch. 2.

7. Royal officials of Yucatan *contra* Juan de Vargas, 1630 (see Ch. 2, note 14).

8. Expediente sobre los indios que llegaron de la Pimienta Grande, 1663 (see Ch. 4, note 14).

9. AGI, México 924, Méritos y servicios de Juan del Castillo y Toledo y Juan Castillo del Arrúe, 1717.

10. Joaquin Hübbe and Andrés Aznar Pérez, "Karte der halbinsel Yucatán, . . ." in *Geographische Mitteilungen*, tafel 11 (Gotha: Justus Perthes, 1879).

11. See discussion concerning the location of Sacalum in Scholes and Roys, *The Maya Chontal*, pp. 279–80.

12. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 10, Ch. 2.

13. *Ibid.*

14. Carta Topográfica 1:125,000, Felipe Carrillo Puerto E16-1 (México: Dirección General de Geografía del Territorio Nacional, Coordinación General de los Servicios Nacionales de Estadística, Geografía e Informática, 1982).

15. My text assumes that López de Cogolludo was mistaken in claiming that Delgado had founded the reduction town of Sacalum in the forests of La Pimienta on his 1621 mission (*Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 10, Ch. 2). If he were correct, the Sacalum to which Mirones and Delgado moved their headquarters in 1622 would have already been established by Delgado the year before. It is more likely, given the information provided in Mirones's diary, however, that López de Cogolludo had confused Delgado's 1621 activities at Hopelchen with the later founding of Sacalum in 1622. I had earlier concluded that López de Cogolludo had also confused the Sacalum established by Delgado and Mirones in 1622 with another mission town of the same name but nearer the Cehach zone, founded as early as 1604 (*Ibid.*, Bk. 8, Ch. 9; Scholes and Roys, *The Maya Chontal*, pp. 279–80, 285–86; see earlier discussion). I now believe, however, that these "two" Sacalums were the same place. In any event, Mirones (see below) made it clear in his diary that Delgado had been the founding minister of Hopelchen.

16. After returning from Hopelchen he may have served briefly at Dzidzantun (Cizontun) northeast of Motul, from where he was recruited by the provincial to join Mirones.

17. The following discussion is based on Documentos respectivos . . . Mirones y Lezcano, 1622. López de Cogolludo apparently had some doubts as to whether the necessary *capitulaciones* were ever submitted to the Consejo, as he stated that he had been unable to find copies of them (*Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 10, Ch. 2).

18. Petition of Mirones y Lezcano, 9 Nov. 1621. Mirones noted that Fuensalida and Orbita were stationed in 1621 at Tecoh and the montañas respectively. Orbita was probably at Sahcabchen at this time.

19. His father, Francisco de Mirones, had served the crown in an unspecified capacity in Flanders from the age of fifteen. His grandfather, Fernando de Mirones, had served in the "war and uprising of Granada."

20. Auto by Cárdenas, 12 Nov. 1621.

21. This must have been the cédula cited by Fuensalida and Orbita in support of their 1618 mission. See Chapter 5.

22. Cárdenas eventually wrote a letter to the king on 27 Jan. 1622, however, in which he requested royal confirmation of the agreements that he had reached with Mirones, citing the two cédulas mentioned above. This letter was accompanied by another from Mirones to the king, dated 7 Feb. 1622, in which Mirones requested a six-year loan from the royal account of 12,000 pesos in addition to royal confirmation of the general agreements. A Council memorandum attached to Mirones's letter, dated 12 May 1623, indicates that the agreements were forwarded to the viceroy of New Spain, who was to "provide what is appropriate to the service of God and His Majesty." Thus, tacit approval for the venture was eventually provided, although it is doubtful that either Mirones or Cárdenas learned of this approval before Mirones was murdered in 1624.

23. Diary of Mirones y Lezcano, 1622. This document includes an open letter from Cárdenas, dated 12 Nov. 1621, explaining the purpose of Mirones's entrada

and ordering obedience and support along the route of his journey from all Maya town officials. The letter states that these officials are to "obey, keep and fulfill what he commands and to provide the Indians what he requests" under threat of whatever penalties Mirones or his agents might decide to apply. By implication, the major task of any Indian labor thus provided would have been the opening of the road into Itza territory.

24. The ceremony would have been performed by Fray Juan Delgado.

25. These towns were said in the testimony to be twenty leagues from Hopelchen on the road toward Campeche. In fact, they are about twenty-five kms north of Hecelchakan on the road between Campeche and Mérida.

26. Pocoboc here and elsewhere in the original document.

27. Zuma in the original, presumably an error.

28. He said in the next sentence that Pedro Uc was actually from Pocboc, which was a visita of Hecelchakan. He obviously considered these the same town. Dzitbalche is about sixteen kms north of Hecelchakan on the road to Mérida, a short distance south of Calkini.

29. In 1618 one of the principal Mayas at Tipu was reputed to be a refugee from Hekelchakan accused of idolatry there (López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 7). This man was a wealthy cacao planter who, like the Hecelchakan traders who traveled to Ixpimienta, was probably a trader himself.

30. From the text it would appear that he went inside the temple, which the interpreter referred to as a *mezquita*, or mosque. "Pagan" temples in Yucatan were often referred to by the term for Muslim temples during the sixteenth century, less so during the seventeenth.

31. Some of these must have been from among the eighty Indians with whom he left from Pustunich.

32. These were certainly from among the original twenty, including his officers who also accompanied him to Ixpimienta.

33. This information suggests that Fray Juan Delgado had little problem in "reducing" the town of Hopelchen in 1622.

34. Whether they were actually naked or simply carried no clothes with them is unclear in the text.

35. Cua in the original text. This name does not appear in Ralph L. Roys's "Personal Names."

36. A small plum-like fruit (*Malphigia punicifolia*).

37. It is unclear whether the Hecelchakan inhabitants who were sent for were living in Hecelchakan, in Hopelchen, or both.

38. Yic in the original. This name also does not appear in Roys's "Personal Names."

39. The ceiba or cottonwood tree (*Ceiba pentandra*) has deep symbolic significance in Maya religion as the sacred tree of life. Traditionally, it is planted in the central plaza of a town.

40. This aguada might have been Laguna Concepción.

41. The promise of crown tribute status of course contradicted the agreement Mirones had reached with the governor.

42. By his previous calculations, there should have been only five Mayas remaining in his party at this point. Subsequent entries indicate that there were at least seven, however.

43. He named this camp San Vidal y Pedro Martír. The messenger brought two letters from Governor Cárdenas with him. The one of these that survives in the diary, dated 19 March, provided assurance that more powder and shot were on their way, that a friar would be joining him, and that he would have an appropriate person recruit the Indians from Oxkutzcab and Ticul. He warned Mirones not to attempt anything that he could not accomplish with so few men and cautioned him to treat any reduced Indians well. As for runaways, he provided Mirones with an order allowing him to administer two hundred lashes and ten years of service in Havana for those who refused to serve Mirones.

44. For this meaning of *bat*, from which the term must be derived, see *bat chaak* ("pedernal [hacha del dios Chaak]") in Alfredo Barrera Vásquez et al., *Diccionario maya Cordemex: maya-español, español-maya* (Mérida: Ediciones Cordemex, 1980), p. 40.

45. The term macehual (*masewal*), used by contemporary rural Yucatec Maya to distinguish themselves from the non-Maya population, once had the meaning "plebeian or common people; náhuatl term, probably introduced by the Spaniards" (translated by the author from a definition attributed to Ralph L. Roys, in Barrera Vásquez et al., p. 503).

46. Construction of new churches at reduction towns was commonly rapid, taking not more than a day or so.

47. El Zia was probably the same place as Dza, mentioned in a letter sent from Mirones to Casanova on December 26, 1623. It was located eight leagues from Sacalum and was probably on the lake marked L. Dza on the 1879 Hübbe and Pérez map, about eleven leagues south of Nohpimienta and about five leagues north of Chichanha.

48. Cárdenas Valencia, *Relación historial*, p. 76.

49. López de Cogolludo presumably had read letters of complaint sent by Fray Diego Delgado to his provincial. These "*tratos y contratos de granjería*" were probably forced payments of designated amounts of beeswax in return for whatever goods, such as clothing, axes, and machetes, that Mirones had brought with him. The documentation for the following section is from *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 10, Ch. 2–3.

50. López de Cogolludo (*ibid.*, Bk. 10, Ch. 2) had received the account of this correspondence in writing from Narváez. Narváez was apparently his source for the account of the massacre at Tah Itza as well as its aftermath.

51. At this point in his account López indicated that he was working from a written account, as he pointed out that the text before him implied that the visitors were unarmed and that they should not have trusted their hosts (*ibid.*)

52. López de Cogolludo decried the fact that the missionary had allowed the soldiers and Tipuans to accompany him (ibid).

53. Ek later gave an account of what had happened after he escaped to Bacalar; this account apparently was the basis for López de Cogolludo's text, possibly provided through the documentation submitted to him by Fray José Narváez. Ibid., Bk. 10, Ch. 3.

54. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 10, Ch. 3. A "juez de grana" was a Spanish official charged with overseeing cochineal production by native populations.

55. This order must have been issued in mid-December 1623. See discussion below concerning Casanova's rescue mission to Sacalum.

56. López de Cogolludo wrote (ibid.) that the massacre occurred on 2 February, the Day of Purification of the Mother of God. This date, however, is incorrect. When Casanova's rescue party arrived at Sacalum on Tuesday, 29 January, the massacre had already taken place. See discussion below.

57. In the middle of his description of the massacre, López de Cogolludo indicated that this information was based on the confessions of those who were later captured, imprisoned, and punished for their role in the massacre (ibid.).

58. The following section is documented in Méritos y servicios de Juan Bernardo Casanova, 1627.

59. This is the first indication that San Felipe was the avocation of Sacalum. San Felipe is mentioned again in a Maya letter, sent to Sacalum, described below.

60. See note 47, this chapter.

61. Probably Noha or Nohha. There is a Nohakal two and one-half leagues southwest of Tzucpimienta and thirteen leagues northwest of Chichanha on the 1879 Hübbe and Pérez map.

62. The term used is *cabalgaduras*.

63. See Anne C. Collins, "The *Maestros Cantores* in Yucatán," in Grant D. Jones, ed., *Anthropology and History in Yucatán* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), pp. 233–247.

64. Méritos y servicios de Juan Bernardo Casanova, 1627; AGI, México 243, El capitán Guillen Peraza de Ayala [pide merced], 1643; AGI, México 925, Comisión al capitán Guillen Peraza de Ayala, 15 March 1624; AGI, México 148, ramo 3, number 40e, El capitán Guillen Peraza de Ayala suplica se le de confirmación de una encomienda, 1629; AGI, México 242, Confirmación de encomienda en capitán Don Andrés de Mendoza, 1672; AGI, México 1962, Cédula, 26 Nov. 1630; AGI, México 3048, Memorial de Doña María Romero, 1638; AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 313B, Merced de encomienda en Rodrigo de Vargas Mayorga, 22 Aug. 1628.

65. Petition by Francisco Camul, governor of Oxkutzcab, et al., 1624.

66. AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 305B, Don Antonio de Salas sobre confirmación de una encomienda de indios, 1624. Salas's petition concerns the activities of Captain Antonio Méndez de Canzo in discovering the perpetrators of the Mirones massacre at Sacalum. See also AGI, México 145, Documents pertaining

to the petition of Don Fernando Camal and others from Oxkutzcab, July 1624, and López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 10, Ch. 3.

67. Comisión al capitán Guillen Peraza de Ayala, 15 March 1624.

68. See discussion of the various forms of compulsory labor in Farriss, *Maya Society under Colonial Rule: The Collective Enterprise of Survival* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 51–56.

69. The holpatan tax, which supported the colonial Indian court, was set at a half-real per married individual, or one real per couple. See discussion of these taxes in Nancy M. Farriss, *Maya Society*, pp. 40–41.

70. Documents pertaining to the petition of Don Fernando Camal and others from Oxkutzcab, July 1624. Scholes and Adams ("Documents Relating to the Mirones Mission," p. 276) quote the Motul Dictionary gloss for *Ah chun tan* as "el principal del pueblo, o que lo es en algún negocio."

71. El capitán Guillen Peraza de Ayala [pide merced], 1643, f. 189r.

7: KATUN 1 AHAU: RESISTANCE

1. AGI, México 360, Luís Sánchez de Aguilar et al. to Governor, 20 Sept. 1638.

2. Munro S. Edmonson, *Heaven Born Merida and its Destiny: The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), pp. 21–23. Roys' translation of this passage (*The Book of Chilam Balam*, p. 157) is slightly different and possibly more accurate: "This shall be the end of its prophecy: there is a great war. The Chan<s> shall rise up in war with the five divisions of Chakan, an army of Chan<s> in Katun 1 Ahau. A parching whirlwind storm is the charge of the katun." The reference to the Chans and Chakan most likely applies to the Itza region, where the Chans were important leaders, and where Chakan referred to the Chakan Itzas on the west end of Lake Petén Itzá.

3. Juan Sánchez de Aguilar suplica confirmación, Chanlacan y Yumpeten, 1630. Title of the encomienda of towns in the Bacalar province, 1622.

4. Ibid.

5. Juan Sánchez de Aguilar suplica confirmación, Chanlacan y Yumpeten, 1630.

6. Title of the encomienda of towns in the Bacalar province, 1622. In his announcement of the vacancy of this encomienda dated 18 April 1622, Governor Diego de Cárdenas reported that these three towns had been "*poblados*" (settled) in the Bacalar province for the past fourteen years, indicating that a reduction had taken place in 1608 or possibly 1609.

7. AGI, Contaduría 912.

8. AGI, Contaduría 913. He collected fifty-four pesos in fines on this visita. During this period he was technically governing the province due to the vacancy in the governorship caused by the death of Governor Francisco Ramírez Briceño.

9. AGI, Contaduría 913.

10. This section is based on "Title of the encomienda of towns in the Bacalar province," 1622.

11. See discussion of these towns in the Appendix.

12. He did list the size of the towns by the number of *casados* (married men) in each, however: Petenzub, about fifty; Zaczuz, thirty; and Tipu, fifty-six.

13. Gómez claimed to have lived in Bacalar itself, where he had served on various occasions as a *cabildo* officer. His wife was the granddaughter of Alonso Hernández de Santiago and Beatriz de Escobar. He claimed (correctly) that Hernández participated in the conquest of the province. Cárdenas, however, considered all of Gómez's claims to be insufficiently documented and passed over what we now know from the available documentation to have been Gómez's fully legitimate right to the newly redefined encomiendas.

This obscure fact—the governor's decision to grant the tributes from these Bacalar towns to a resident of Mérida with no kinship ties to the villa's founders—merits interpretation. Just as Cárdenas demonstrated favoritism to Mirones, an outsider to the province of Yucatán who had served only as a notorious collector of repartimiento payments that served to pad the governor's purse, he also used favoritism in denying the Bacalar encomiendas to a "native son" of the province. While we do not know why he chose to let Rodríguez, as opposed to others, know about this obscure vacancy, we may regard the decision to remove the sphere of control over these towns from Bacalar to Mérida as part of his general effort to centralize his own control over the frontiers by rewarding his closest associates wherever possible.

14. Title of the encomienda of Chanlacan and Yumpeten in Juan Sánchez de Aguilar, 24 Nov. 1626 (see note 59, Ch. 3); AGI, México 1952, Confirmación [cédula] de una encomienda en Juan Sánchez de Aguilar, pueblos de Chanlacan y Yumpeten, 16 Oct. 1630.

15. Normally the possession of two encomiendas was prohibited. The justification of this double assignment was based on the small amount of tribute that they generated.

16. Certification by Francisco de Sanabria, 2 June 1608.

17. AGI, México 906, Expediente concerning the reduction of the Indians of the Bahía del Espíritu Santo and the formation of the town of Kanchaquay (Nuestra Señora de la Nueva Concepción) by Hernando de Landeras, 1620–1621.

18. The town, he said, had the bay on one side and marshes (*ciénegas* and *pantanos*) on the other; it was located on a point and had no entrance by land. This would appear to be Punta Santa Rosa on the north side of the bay, indicated on the 1879 Hübbe and Pérez map.

19. Landeras reported that in 1617 a boatload of Englishmen had entered somewhere in the vicinity of Chetumal Bay, capturing Pedro Rojo, Antonio Gómez, and three other vecinos of Bacalar.

20. Royal officials of Yucatan contra Juan de Vargas, 1630. The term that I have glossed as "employees" was *criados*, which takes on the implication of "henchmen" during this period. The follow-up investigation to this lawsuit may

be found in AGI, México 92, Expediente sobre la visita del Lic. Iñigo de Arguello Carvajal, oidor de Nueva España y juez de comisión, 1630. The second *cuaderno* of the document contains a section on the fugitives said to be localized on the Río de la Pimienta.

21. Equiluz, who had been Mirones's agent for the entrada to Ixpimienta, was hardly likely to be a sympathetic opponent of the jueces.

22. Diego López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán* (Madrid: J. García Infanzón, 1688), Bk. 10, Ch. 17.

23. This section is based on López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 10, Ch. 17. The governor's decree to pursue the reduction, issued on 22 Dec. 1631, is quoted by López de Cogolludo.

24. Petición de Cristóbal Sánchez, 1631.

25. Most of the witnesses claimed that this was the answer given to this question.

26. In Belize today a similar question put to a Maya villager might generate the reply, "Oh, just to take a walk."

27. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 11, Ch. 12.

28. AGI, Contaduría 915A.

29. Governor to Crown, 10 July 1638.

30. This man was Gregorio Marín de Aguilar, who had served as Bacalar's secular priest at least since 1632.

31. This would have been in reference to the problems Fuensalida and Orbita faced with the secular priest of Bacalar in 1618–1619.

32. Luís Sánchez de Aguilar et al., to Governor, 20 Sept. 1638. The other signers were Francisco Sánchez de la Seña, Cristóbal Delgado, Bartolomé Gómez de Santoyo, and Juan Martín de los Cedros. Sánchez de la Seña was the villa's alférez mayor. Delgado and Gómez de Santoyo must have been regidores and Martín de los Cedros the scribe.

33. AGI, México 360, Luís Sánchez de Aguilar to Governor, 29 Oct. 1638.

34. AGI, México 360, Luís Sánchez de Aguilar to Governor, 5 Nov. 1638.

35. Francisco de Cárdenas Valencia, *Relación historial eclesiástica de la provincia de Yucatán de la Nueva España escrita en el año de 1639* (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1937), p. 97.

36. Bishop of Yucatán to Crown, 5 March 1643.

37. López de Cogolludo (*Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 11, Ch. 13) indicates that in 1643 the town and church of Lamanai had just been burned and deserted upon the approach of Fuensalida and his party, suggesting that it had been resettled since 1638.

38. Ibid., Bk. 11, Ch. 12.

39. Elizabeth Graham, personal communication, 1986.

8: KATUN 1 AHAU: REBELLION

1. Diego López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán* (Madrid: J. García Infanzón, 1688), Bk. 11, Ch. 14.

2. Fuensalida's *relación* of the events of 1641, like that of the missions of 1618–1619, was interpreted by López de Cogolludo, who apparently followed the original text most closely (*ibid.*, Bk. 11, Ch. 12–17).

3. This account was summarized in much less detail by France V. Scholes and J. Eric S. Thompson, "The Francisco Pérez *Probanza* and the *Matrícula* of Tipu," in Grant D. Jones, ed., *Anthropology and History in Yucatán* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977).

4. Francisco de Cárdenas Valencia, *Relación historial eclesiástica de la provincia de Yucatán de la Nueva España escrita en el año de 1639* (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1937), p. 97.

5. The bishop of Yucatan, not mentioning Figueroa by name, wrote to the Crown on 5 March 1643 (AGI, México 369) that

This priest went, and by a letter and Indian emissaries whom he sent from a convenient place, he announced his arrival, requesting that they show themselves with some principales. And they continued to be so stubborn that they wished not only not to give ear to the priest but also took the Indian emissaries, who did not reappear. The priest, after many days awaiting the Indians' decision and determining that this would bear no fruit, returned.

6. Estrada had been the comisario or procurador of Bacalar in 1626–1627 and the defensor de naturales in 1627 (Title of the encomienda of Chanlacan and Yumpeten, 1626). Elsewhere López de Cogolludo indicated that Estrada was a native of Mérida and that he had served both as alcalde and military captain in Bacalar before becoming a Franciscan novice or lay-friar (*Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 12, Ch. 11). He died in 1646 of an illness that began on his last trip with Fuensalida to the Bacalar province.

7. Marín de Aguilar was later assigned to Nabalán near Valladolid.

8. *Ibid.*, Bk. 11, Ch. 12.

9. Lamanai had obviously been resettled since 1638, when it was listed as a reduction town near Bacalar. It is possible that the later, larger church at Lamanai was built during the period between late 1638 and mid-1641 as an effort to stimulate resettlement of the area.

10. *Ibid.*, Bk. 11, Ch. 13.

11. When Dávila sent messengers from Bacalar to Chetumal in 1531, requesting fowls and maize as a sign of submission, the messengers returned "with the answer that they did not want to go but rather would declare war and would give us the fowls on spears and the maize on arrows" (Dávila, "Relación," p. 100). The delivery of fowls at this much later date was apparently a reversal of the customary symbol of submission.

12. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 11, Ch. 13. The author at this point inserts a statement that is out of context, recounting the towns through which the friars passed. The sentence may not have been from Fuensalida's text at all, as the spellings of place names are irregular and include places on the coast through which they did not pass on this part of the entrada.

In this quotation and some of those that follow, I have left the Maya phrase as reported in López de Cogolludo, rendering his (or Fuensalida's?) Spanish translation of the phrase in English.

13. Later on we learn that they were unprotected by any substantial covering during their stay in the orchard.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., Bk. 11, Ch. 14.

17. Ibid., Bk. 11, Ch. 15.

18. Ibid. This is a loose translation of a difficult passage. Clearly they feared treachery on the part of the Bacalar Mayas, who had been in close contact with those of Lamanai in the past due to reductions and contacts at San Juan Extramuros.

19. Ibid., Bk. 11, Ch. 16.

20. Fuensalida must have made full use of this first account, of which this is the only mention, in preparing his memoirs years later. Even the first account, which was apparently written by Fuensalida and Estrada together, was considered by those who first heard it read in Mérida to be "a little long-winded." The remarkable detail of the account interpreted by López de Cogolludo surely reflects the dependence Fuensalida had on the earlier written account, prepared just after his return to Bacalar.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid., Bk. 12, Ch. 11.

23. Unless otherwise indicated, the documentation for this section is from *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 11, Ch. 16. López de Cogolludo based his account of Tejero's experiences on Tejero's own *relación*, a copy of which Tejero had made available to the chronicler.

24. The text indicates that Campin was twenty leagues by land from Soite but forty leagues by boat. Cehake was apparently located near Soite.

25. López de Cogolludo's account of Tejero's experiences is quite garbled. I have had to reconstruct what appears to have happened, but the reader should realize that there is some uncertainty about the details of this account.

26. Scholes and Thompson, "The Francisco Pérez *Probanza*," p. 67.

27. Bishop of Yucatan to Crown, 5 March 1643. The bishop also provided a sketchy description of the experiences of Fuensalida and Estrada on their entrada to the upper Belize River.

28. This section is based on López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 11, Ch. 17; AGI, México 360, Governor to Crown, 7 Feb. 1643, with auto and rela-

ción concerning the pirate attacks on Bacalar in 1642, 13 Dec. 1642; Bishop of Yucatan to Crown, 5 March 1643.

29. Two Indians from Soite and fifteen from Honduras escaped to Bacalar to tell their story (Governor to Crown, 7 Feb. 1643). There is some confusion as to whether these kidnappings occurred before or after the sacking of Bacalar. The bishop indicated that Diego el Mulato kidnapped the Indian inhabitants of "two small towns" *after* sacking Bacalar (Bishop of Yucatan to Crown, 5 March 1643), and López de Cogolludo wrote that the pirates kidnapped inhabitants of Soite as they retreated from the villa (*Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 11, Ch. 17). It is possible that these events actually occurred on both occasions.

30. Auto and relación concerning pirate attacks, 13 Dec. 1642. This may be the earliest known use of this name for the Belize River.

31. Ibid.

32. Sebastián Rodríguez had been comisario of Bacalar in 1623 and alcalde in 1627 (AGI, Contaduría 913, Title of the encomienda of Chanlacan and Yumpeten, 1626). Nothing is known of the other two.

33. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 12, Ch. 1.

34. The sources for this reduction, in addition to López de Cogolludo, are AGI, México 244, Méritos y servicios de Antonio de Magaña y Solis, 1644; and AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 308A, Testimonio de una información fecha a favor de la religión de Señor San Francisco sobre la reducción que se hizo en tiempo del governador Enrique de Avila y Pacheco, 1644.

35. The most detailed description of this entrada is in Testimonio de una información a favor de la religión de Señor San Francisco, 1644.

36. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 12, Ch. 12.

37. Ibid., Bk. 11, Ch. 17. This move took place between the 1648 attack and 1652, by which time the resettlement at Pacha was complete. I suspect that it happened in 1648, shortly after the attack on Bacalar by the pirate Abraham. See Méritos y servicios del capitán Francisco Pérez, 1661, in which it is clear that Captain Francisco Pérez was operating from Pacha, alias Salamanca de Bacalar, at least as early as 1652.

38. Scholes and Thompson, "The Francisco Pérez *Probanza*"; Méritos y servicios de Capitán Francisco Pérez, 1661. Pérez's probanza, a complex document, is dated 1655; the date of the full expediente is based on the final auto, dated 1661. This section is based entirely on this document.

39. Scholes and Thompson, "The Francisco Pérez *Probanza*," p. 68.

40. Hautila in the original. Scholes and Thompson considered this town to be Uatibal, and in this assumption they were almost certainly correct.

41. Ibid., p. 53.

42. Ibid., pp. 58–64. Their use of the label "*matrícula* of Tipu" is a misnomer, as the *matrícula* was compiled at Chunukum, not Tipu. I therefore have chosen to refer to it as the *matrícula* of Chunukum.

43. Ibid., pp. 58–64.

44. Ibid., p. 64.

45. Juan Couoh was the only inhabitant of Lamanai listed in the matrícula.
46. Ibid., p. 67.
47. Ibid., p. 65.
48. Ibid., p. 67.

9: IMPENDING KATUN AHAU

1. AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 3, Pablo Gil de Azamar to Francisco de Hariza, 30 Oct. 1695, enclosed in Ursúa to Barrios Leal, 1 Dec. 1695. References to the contents of this letter are found in AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 10, Auto del gobernador Martín de Ursúa y Arismendi, Mérida, 31 Dec. 1695.

2. The historical accounts for Katun 8 Ahau from the *Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel* (Roys's translation) are cited in Victoria Reifler Bricker, *The Indian Christ, the Indian King: The Historical Substrate of Maya Myth and Ritual* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 7. As Bricker notes, each of these four accounts, which predate the Itza conquest, describes the abandonment or destruction (and subsequent abandonment) of an Itza city.

Bricker (*Indian Christ, Indian King*, p. 23) argues the following with regard to the timing of Katun 8 Ahau (her references omitted here):

In one of the chronicles of the *Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel*, Bishop Francisco Toral's arrival in Yucatan in 1562 is correlated with the sixth *tun* (360-day year) of Katun 9 Ahau. If this correlation is correct, then it means that the year 1618 fell approximately two years after the beginning of Katun 3 Ahau. Counting forward from 1616, the year Katun 3 Ahau supposedly began, we can calculate the beginning of the next Katun 8 Ahau, which should have been in 1695. The fact that 1695 was the year that the Itza sent word of their willingness to be converted lends support to this reasoning.

Munro S. Edmonson, on the other hand, has calculated on the basis of other evidence that Katun 3 Ahau began in 1618 and Katun 8 Ahau in 1697 (*Heaven Born Merida and its Destiny: The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel* [Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986], p. 274).

The best ethnographic evidence for the beginning date of Katun 8 Ahau was provided by Fray Andrés de Avendaño y Loyola, who discussed with Can Ek and other Lake Peten Itza area leaders (including the elderly cacique of the Chakan Itzas named Couoh as well as several priests) the calculation of the appearance of the new katun. These discussions took place on 16 January, 1696, and resulted in agreement that "four months thereafter was the time wanting to fill out the said period when all the older men would receive baptism. . . ." (See Avendaño's *Relation of Two Trips to Peten . . .*, Charles P. Bowdich and Guillermo Rivera, trans., and Frank Comparato, ed. [Culver City, CA: Labyrinthos, 1987], pp. 40, 49.) This would have placed the katun change in mid-May 1696.

Thompson, however, noted that these agreements followed upon Avendaño's own persuasive interpretations of the calendar, in which he argued for an early conclusion of the current katun (which argument, however, Thompson incorrectly concluded led to an August rather than a May date). Thompson regarded the Maya agreements with Avendaño to have been nothing more than "the inevitably affirmative reaction of a Maya to a white man's pronouncements" and was skeptical that the friar had in fact convinced them. Thompson, using the Goodman-Thompson-Martínez correlation, calculated the beginning of Katun 8 Ahau on about 28 July 1697. See J. Eric S. Thompson, "A Proposal for Constituting a Maya Subgroup, Cultural and Linguistic, in the Petén and Adjacent Regions," in Grant D. Jones, ed., *Anthropology and History in Yucatán* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), pp. 33–34.

I am more inclined to accept a 1696 date for the katun change in light of the additional prophetic discourse associated with the arrival of the Tipu-Itza delegation in Mérida at the end of 1695 (discussed below). Whether or not early or mid-1696 was the "correct" period, it appears to have been widely believed among Lake Peten Itza populations that this was the time for a change of political order.

3. This section is based on Expediente sobre los indios que llegaron de la Pimienta Grande al pueblo de Oxlutzcab, 1663. (See Chapter 4, note 14.) There is another copy of this expediente in AGI, México 907.

4. Sacalaxa, according to another witness.

5. Ibid., f. 1515v.

6. Nancy M. Farriss, *Maya Society under Colonial Rule: The Collective Enterprise of Survival* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 78–79, 82–83. The documentary sources for these rebellions are voluminous. Among the most important are AGI, México 307, Diligencias que se han hecho para la reducción de los indios de Sahcabchen y otros pueblos, 1670; México 361, Autos de testimonio sobre reducción de los indios de Sahcabchen, Popola, etc., 1668; México 362, Governor Antonio de Layseca to Fr. Payo de Rivera, 10 June 1678; México 1010, Relación de todo lo que ha pasado y pasa en el pueblo de San Antonio de Sahchon [Sahcabchen], desde 22 feb. 1669 hasta 25 julio 1669, por Fr. Cristóbal Sánchez, 26 July 1669 (in Testimonio de autos, cartas, y diligencias, tocantes al saco que el enemigo hizo en el puerto de San Francisco de Campeche, 1678, f. 70–74); and various documents in the extensive residencia of Governor Rodrigo de Flores Aldana, 1666–1670 (Escribanía de Cámara 315A–318B, 328A–C).

7. AGI, México 312, Auto de ruego from dean and cabildo of Mérida cathedral to Franciscan provincial, 9 Jan. 1696, in Expediente sobre misiones en el Peten Itza, 1696, f. 4v–12r (other copies f. 40v–57r of this expediente and AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 8, f. 16–22).

8. AGI, México 248, Méritos y servicios de Antonio de Ayora Porras, no date (before 1680). See also AGI, México 920, Probanza of Bartolomé de la Garma, 11 Aug. 1696, which includes Certificación de Don Antonio de Ayora Porras, Hopelchen, 3 Nov. 1678, indicating that Garma was appointed as an explorer on

the Bacalar entrada that reached Chaclol. Part of this account is also taken from Auto de ruego from dean and cabildo, 9 Jan. 1696.

9. On the punishment of the fugitive leaders see AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 321A, Residencia del general Don Antonio de Layseca Alvarado, por Don Juan Bruno Tello de Guzmán, pieza 3, 1683; escrita de descargos, 2 Oct. 1683.

10. San Antonio Tiz was probably Tetis, once part of the Ah Canul province, located in Camino Real Bajo west of Mérida. See Ralph L. Roys, *The Political Geography of the Yucatan Maya*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 613 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1957), pp. 27, 31; Peter Gerhard, *The Southeast Frontier of New Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 95, 99. Chable, also known as Chablekal, was located in the Costa northeast of Mérida. It was once part of the Cechpech province. See Roys, *Political Geography*, pp. 40, 44; Gerhard, *The Southeast Frontier*, pp. 103, 104, 111–12.

11. Méritos y servicios de Ayora Porras, no date.

12. Residencia de Layseca Alvarado, 1683.

13. J. Eric S. Thompson, *The Maya of Belize* (Belize City: Benex Press), 1972, p. 22. The documentation for these four versions is as follows.

a. Memorias de los parajes y ríos que ay desde el pueblo de S. Miguel Manché hasta los indios ahizaes—el camino y indios. This version is found in its original manuscript form in the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris. There is a photocopy of the manuscript in the Middle American Research Institute from which three translations have been made: Doris Zemurray Stone, "The *Entrada* of 1677," in *Some Spanish Entradas, 1524–1695*, Publications of the Middle American Research Institute, Tulane University, no. 4 (New Orleans: Tulane University, 1932), 259–69; Ethel-Jane W. Bunting, "From Cahabon to Bacalar in 1677," *Maya Society Quarterly* 1 (1932): 112–19; and Thompson, *The Maya of Belize*, where the document is treated extensively and with considerable care.

b. Viage a Bacalar, y encuentro de los de Bacalar, los nombres estan en el derrotero que di a V.P.M.R., el de la canoa se llama Alonso Moreno, 1703? Original manuscript in Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris. Cited in Thompson, *The Maya of Belize*, with a brief quotation from it on p. 27.

c. Francisco Ximénez, *Historia de la provincia de San Vicente de Chiapa y Guatemala*. Biblioteca "Goathemala" de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1929–1971), Vol. 3, Bk. 5, Ch. 31. Thompson, *The Maya of Belize*, p. 27, cites this as yet a third memorandum, although Stone, in "The *Entrada* of Belize," p. 260, considers this passage to be an interpretation of version 1.

d. Götz Freiherr von Houwald, ed., *Nicolás de Valenzuela: conquista del Lacandón y conquista del Chol*, Vol. 2 (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1979), pp. 30–55. This version, from the Berlin Valenzuela manuscript, is also found in AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 339A and AGI, Guatemala 152. It is similar to but shorter than version 1.

14. Unless otherwise indicated, the facts of Delgado's trip are taken from Thompson, *The Maya of Belize*, pp. 24–27.

15. Houwald, *Nicolás de Valenzuela*, p. 32.

16. This section is based on AGI, México 360, Expediente sobre la muerte de tres religiosos de San Francisco y otros españoles en el pueblo de Paliac, 1684–1687. Hariza, who was to play such a central role in the 1695 emissary from Tah Itza via Tipu to Mérida, was then also serving as “tenedor de vara por ausencia del capitán Don Juan Castillo, alcalde propietario” (that is, acting alcalde in the absence of Castillo, the actual alcalde) of Bacalar. Castillo’s precise role in Bacalar was unclear, and he certainly did not live in Bacalar at the time; he probably held an encomienda at Chunhuhub.

17. Thompson (*The Maya of Belize*, p. 32) identified the Paliac River as the Río Grande in the Toledo District.

18. Auto de ruego by dean and cabildo of Mérida, 9 Jan. 1696.

19. AGI, México 924, Auto by Governor Bruno Tello de Guzmán, 17 Aug. 1686, in Méritos y servicios de Juan del Castillo y Toledo y Juan Castillo del Arrúe, 1717. Mention of the cédula is included in Castillo’s title as “capitán general y justicia mayor de las montañas,” 20 Oct. 1686, also part of his Méritos y servicios, but no copy of it is included. Partial copies of the larger document are also in AGI, México 252, 253, and 254, but the version in México 924 contains additional important materials on Castillo y Toledo’s efforts in 1695–1696 to obtain a royal loan and permission to pursue the Yucatecan end of the Itza conquest along the road that he had opened in 1687 toward Tipu. All references to this documentation in the pages that follow are taken from the version in México 924.

20. The name Juan del Castillo y Toledo will refer throughout this text to the father for reasons of clarity; the son will be referred to as Castillo y Arrúe.

21. Title of alférez de infantería in Juan Castillo de Toledo, 9 April 1682; Título de capitán de la sierra en Juan Castillo y Toledo, 3 Oct. 1684, in Méritos y servicios de Castillo y Castillo, f. 1053r–57r.

22. Order by Governor Bruno Tello de Guzmán, 22 Oct. 1686, in Méritos y servicios de Castillo y Castillo, f. 1064v–70v.

23. Muestra y reseña de armas, Oukutzcab, 8 Nov. 1686, in Méritos y servicios de Castillo y Castillo, f. 1070v–76v.

24. Fray Juan de Almeda to Juan del Castillo, 4 March 1687; Memorial by Captain Juan del Castillo y Toledo, Holpat, 1 March 1687. In Méritos y servicios de Castillo y Castillo, f. 1082r–85v.

25. Memoria de los gastos que yo el capitán Don Juan del Castillo y Toledo voy haciendo con la gente que va a mi cargo . . . , in Méritos y servicios de Castillo y Castillo, 20 Nov. 1686, f. 1077v–80r.

26. Memorial by Juan del Castillo y Toledo, 1 March 1687.

27. Ibid.

28. Certification by Fray Francisco de Centurión, Holpat, 18 March 1687, in Méritos y servicios de Castillo y Castillo, f. 1085v.

29. Castillo y Toledo later claimed to have reduced 1,656 Indians (Memorial by Juan del Castillo y Toledo, no date [about 1 June 1687]) but later edged the

number up to "cerca de mil y siete cientos almas" (Petition by same, no date [probably 1696], in Méritos y servicios de Castillo y Castillo, f. 1096v–99v, 1114r–35r).

30. Order by Governor Tello de Guzmán, 22 Oct. 1686.

31. The ruins of this town, long known as Chichanha, may still be seen in the southeasternmost corner of Quintana Roo not far west of the border with Belize. Chichanha was the center of the leadership of the so-called Pacíficos del Sur during the nineteenth-century Caste War of Yucatan. Santa Clara continued to be the avocation of the town's population even after their relocation at Icaiche during the 1860s.

32. Certification of Fray Bernardino de Espejo, 12 Sept. 1688, in Méritos y servicios de Castillo y Castillo, f. 1,106v–7r.

33. Certification by the alférez Francisco de Navarrete, no date (early 1688), in Méritos y servicios de Castillo y Castillo, f. 1,002v–3r.

34. For example, the alférez Juan de Figueroa wrote from Chanchanha to the Governor on 30 April 1690 in his capacity as *cabo* of the forest towns (Auto by Governor Juan Joseph de la Barcena, 11 May 1690, f. 1108r–10v). In a 1696 petition Castillo y Toledo stated that he formed the reducto at Chanchanha because it was "la medianía del despoblado" (that is, in the center of the area reduced during the entrada) (f. 1121r).

35. Ichquisil and Ichesezil in this document. A more plausible rendering, Ichuitzil, is from another version of this document in AGI, México 252, f. 668v. The official government records in Mérida used Izuizil (Castillo y Castillo, f. 1,102).

36. From *sibis*, larvae?

37. In the escribano mayor's certification of the appointment of caciques, alcaldes, and other principales of these towns, which followed upon their visit to Mérida in 1688 to receive confirmation of their offices, La Pimienta was indicated as comprising two communities. These were named La Pimienta Alta and La Pimienta Baja respectively, again strongly suggesting their status as barrios of a larger town.

38. Memorial by Castillo y Toledo, no date.

39. Auto by Governor Juan Joseph de la Barcena, 11 May 1690, in Méritos y servicios de Castillo y Castillo, f. 1108r–10v.

40. Memorial by Castillo y Toledo, no date.

41. Petition by Castillo y Toledo, no date. Castillo y Toledo's son, however, had been assigned to sit in Cauich, along the new road, while Captain Alonso García Parédes directed the road project toward the south. Castillo y Toledo had been ordered to recruit Maya troops from the Sierra to accompany his son. These he accompanied to Cauich, where he stayed with his son for six months with six of his own Spanish militiamen.

42. One of these cédulas, dated 22 June 1695 (in Méritos y servicios de Castillo y Castillo, f. 1147r–v), indicates that the Crown was attempting to resolve the fact that Ursúa had already been instructed to pursue the Itza entrada

via the new road, even while Castillo y Toledo was requesting a royal loan of 4,000 pesos to do the same along a road from Chanchanha through Tipu. The cédula, recognizing that Ursúa was now governor, stated in effect that Castillo y Toledo and Ursúa would have to work out the best arrangement for the total enterprise, with Castillo y Toledo cooperating with Ursúa. Despite this ambiguity, however, his loan was approved.

43. Petition by Castillo y Toledo, 1696 (see note 34, this chapter).

44. Cuaderno 2 (Testimonios de certificaciones . . . de las personas que poseían las encomiendas y de su producto), in *Matrícula de los pueblos de la provincia*, 1688, f. 39 (see Ch. 3, note 14).

45. AGI Patronato 237, ramo 10, Francisco Hariza to Governor, 7 July 1695; auto by Governor Martín de Ursúa y Arismendi, Mérida, 7 Sept. 1695. The events described in this section are also detailed in Juan de Villagutierre Sotomayor, *Historia de la conquista de la provincia de el Itza*, Biblioteca "Goathemala" de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia, vol. 9 (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1933), Bk. 5, Ch. 10–12. Villagutierre's account is marred here and elsewhere by numerous errors of transcription from the original documents, however.

A *piragua* can be a long dugout canoe. But here, where the term is contrasted with canoes, it may mean a large flat-bottomed boat.

46. Hariza owned a house at Tipu and had stored at the "port" there some wax that he apparently acquired at Tipu in order to sell in Yucatan. AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 10, Pablo Gil de Azamar to Francisco de Hariza, no date (probably early December 1695).

47. Ursúa later reported the number of baptized at and around Tipu to be more than 350, but it is not clear whether this was merely an exaggeration of Hariza's report or was based on additional information postdating that report. Ursúa to Barrios Leal, 1 Dec. 1695.

48. This clothing, Ursúa wrote, was "very fine [*delgado*] and of different colors." AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 10, Martín de Ursúa to Jacinto Barrios Leal, President of the Audiencia of Guatemala, 1 Dec. 1695.

49. Auto by Governor Martín de Ursúa y Arismendi, 7 Sept. 1695; Ursúa to Barrios Leal, 1 Dec. 1695.

50. Pablo Gil de Azamar to Francisco de Hariza, 30 Oct. 1695, enclosed in Ursúa to Barrios Leal, 1 Dec. 1695.

51. Agustín Cano, "Informe dado al rey por el padre fray Agustín Cano sobre la entrada que por la parte de al Verapaz se hizo al Petén en el año de 1695, y fragmento de una carta al mismo, sobre el propio asunto," *Anales de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia* 18, no. 1 (1942): 65–79.

52. The wording of this statement suggests that Katun 8 Ahau had already begun in late 1695; see discussion in note 2, this chapter.

53. See discussion of these events in Bricker, *Indian Christ, Indian King*, pp. 22–23.

54. AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 3, Ursúa to Conde de Galve, 2 Dec. 1695.

55. AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 3, Ursúa to Can Ek, 8 Dec. 1695.
56. Avendaño y Loyola, "Relación de las dos entradas."
57. Gil de Azamar to Hariza, no date.
58. AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 10, Francisco de Hariza to Governor, 9 Dec. 1695.
59. Villagutierre, *Historia de la conquista*, Bk. 8, Ch. 4.
60. France V. Scholes and J. Eric S. Thompson, "The Francisco Pérez *Probanza* and the *Matrícula* of Tipu," in Grant D. Jones, ed., *Anthropology and History in Yucatán* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), p. 57. For further details on Martín Chan's relationship to Can Ek, see note 73, this chapter.
61. The description of the Itza delegation's arrival and activities in Mérida is found in AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 3, Recibimiento del indio Ah Chan en Mérida, 26 Dec. 1695. See also Villagutierre, *Historia de la conquista*, Bk. 6, Ch. 3–4.
62. Oddly, there was no mention of Franciscan friars, who must not have been in attendance. One Franciscan who was *not* there was Fray Andrés de Avendaño y Loyola, who was by then well on his way to his now-famous encounter with Can Ek. Villagutierre Soto-Mayor (*Historia de la conquista*, Bk. 7, Ch. 1) incorrectly states that at the time of Ah Chan's visit to Mérida Fray Andrés de Avendaño y Loyola was on the road to Tzuctoc and Batcab, along the camino real to Lake Peten Itza, and that Ursúa sent for him after Ah Chan's arrival in order to send him on to see Can Ek with a letter written especially by the governor for the occasion. That letter was written on 8 December, however, and Avendaño's party left Mérida on the 13th, well before Ah Chan's arrival.
63. AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 8, Auto by cabildo, 11 Jan. 1696. See also Villagutierre, *Historia de la conquista*, Bk. 6, Ch. 5 and Bk. 8, Ch. 5.
64. Following the Itza conquest, Martín Chan confirmed that when he left Yalain "preparations had already been made to receive the priests, gifts of food and all kinds of supplies, and even a new house—much better than the others, which had been made just for the religious" (Villagutierre, *Historia de la conquista*, Bk. 8, Ch. 4).
65. The Bowditch-Rivera translation unfortunately glosses "moso español" as "boy." *Relation of Two Trips*, p. 54 (f. 50r in original manuscript). This individual was almost certainly Pablo Gil de Azamar, who was later imprisoned under suspicion that he had sent false ambassadors to Mérida. See AGI, Guatemala 151, pieza 3, Petition of Pablo Gil de Azamar, Sept. 1696, f. 235–37.
66. Avendaño, *Relation of Two Trips*, p. 54. The double name Ah Chan Tan Ah Tek is a puzzlement.
67. At least three of the party of four that arrived at Mérida at Christmastime were members of the group that had gone there during September. Achanthan Ah Tek, the Chans' brother-in-law, was baptised Juan Francisco Tek. The fourth member was baptised Manuel Joseph Chaias (Chayax?), a name that does not correspond to the Ah Ku mentioned here.
68. See *ibid.*, p. 56, for note on the abandoned state of Chanchanha. Sometime between 1693 and 1696 the population of Chanchanha had been moved to

San Juan de Dzibalchen, south of Sahcabchen (AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 8, Petition from cacique and justicias of pueblo of San Juan de Dzibalchen, 1696; see also Gerhard, *The Southeast Frontier*, p. 90 [map], p. 94).

69. AGI, Guatemala 151, pieza 3, Testimony of Fray Andrés de Avendaño y Loyola, 20 August 1696, f. 165r-v.

70. Ibid., f. 164v-165r. See also *Relation of Two Trips*, pp. 65-66, including footnotes 175-76.

71. AGI, Guatemala 151, pieza 3, Testimony of Fray Gregorio Cledera, 20 August 1696, f. 157.

72. AGI, Guatemala 151, pieza 3, Declaration of Pedro Mallen de Rueda, 20 August 1696, f. 167v.

73. This documentation, which is extensive and complex, is still under study. Summaries of it, which are not entirely reliable, may be found in Villagutierre, *Historia de la conquista*, Bk. 8, Ch. 4, 16; Bk. 10, Ch. 9. Future research may change the interpretation offered here.

As noted earlier, Martín Chan, in testimony taken after the Itza conquest, repeated his claim that his father was married to Can Ek's sister named Can Te. This woman, he said, came from Chichen Itza and had died long ago. (Certainly he meant that her ancestors were from Chichen Itza.) His father had died earlier from a snake bite (see Villagutierre, *Historia de la conquista*, Bk. 8, Ch. 4). Four men from Chan's political group who testified at Bacalar in October 1696 offered a somewhat different interpretation of his kinship affiliations, however. According to these four, Chan's father was Kin Can Te, the ruler of a group of towns on the eastern end of Lake Peten Itza, at that time in opposition to Can Ek. They made no mention that Kin Can Te might be dead, but he almost certainly was, as Chomax Zulu was at that time the principal leader of Yalain. Chan, they said, was the "legitimate nephew" of Can Ek, but his mother, whom they did not name, had died. His father's second wife was Kin Can Te's sister. This information suggests longstanding elite intermarriage between lineages named Can, Chan, Ek, and Te. I suspect that the individual who accompanied Chan to Mérida named Tek may have also been a Te. (See AGI, Guatemala 151, pieza 3, Declaration of four witnesses from territory of Kin Can Te, 24 Oct. 1696.)

74. AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 8, Auto by cabildo eclesiástico, 4 Dec. 1695. The original plan was for a mission of eleven priests, but the designated leader, Br. Estevan de Saraus, who had worked recently with Captain Alonso García Parédes in the mission to the Cechaches and who at the time was the cura of Sahcabchen, apparently did not participate. The cura of Bacalar was Br. Pedro Martín Negrón. Seven other members of the mission included Brs. Gaspar de Güemes, Francisco de San Miguel, Tomás Pérez, Manuel Méndez, Lorenzo Güemes, Diego Rajón, and Feliz Sánchez. Eventually we learn that Gaspar de Güemes actually served as the superior on the mission (see below), but I can find no record of the names of the other member. For another account of this mission see Villagutierre, *Historia de la Conquista*, Bk. 6, Ch. 5.

75. AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 8, Auto by ecclesiastical cabildo, 9 Jan. 1696.

76. AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 339B, pieza 18, Declaración del bachiller Don Gaspar de Güemes, 29 Nov. 1703.

77. Güemes recalled the number of soldiers as twenty-five, although Ursúa reported that there were thirty, the original number planned. Patronato 237, ramo 1, Martín de Ursúa to Crown, 12 May 1696.

78. Tipuans who visited Ursúa just following the Itza conquest informed him that Tipu constituted two towns of about 400 persons in all—not including a small population of Muzules in the forest toward the east. AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 1, no. 11, Ursúa y Arismendi to Captain General of Guatemala, 12 June 1697.

79. Martín Chan testified following the conquest of Tah Itza that after two weeks at Tipu he was warned by the town's cacique, whose name was Zima, that the Spaniards were planning to kill him because the Itzas had recently killed some Spaniards at the lake. He subsequently fled to Yalain and went into hiding. See Villagutierre, *Historia de la conquista*, Bk. 8, Ch. 4.

80. Güemes reported that he had wine, flour, and other staples sent ahead to Tipu, having received from Ursúa about 300 pesos to spend in addition to 100 pesos for travel and a *tercio* of salt. On the road Hariza supplied them with bread, beef, and beans, and at their "*mansión*" at Tipu they were supplied with chickens, wild meat, and fish. This *mansión* they apparently constructed as their barracks after their arrival at Tipu.

81. AGI, Patronato 237, ramo 1, Ursúa to Conde de Galve, 10 March 1696. This battle is described in Alonso García de Paredes to Ursúa (?), 4 Feb. 1696, the source apparently used by Villagutierre (*Historia de la conquista*, Bk. 7, Ch. 4). Villagutierre's casualty list appears to be rather exaggerated, but otherwise his account fairly accurately mirrors that of García Paredes. Ursúa later claimed that the Itzas had killed fourteen Spaniards and Indians, including Fr. Juan de San Buenaventura and his lay-brother companion. AGI, Guatemala 151B, Pieza 2, Junta de Guerra, 12 March 1697. The details of these killings, some of which occurred after the individuals were captured, emerged in the course of testimony taken after the storming of Tah Itza on 13 March, 1697. See AGI, Guatemala 151B, Pieza 2, Declaration of Ah Can Ek, 31 March, 1697, and Declarations of Kin Can Ek, Can Ek (relative of Ah Kan Ek), and the youth Camal, 16 April 1697.

82. Ursúa to Conde de Galve, 10 March 1696.

83. Ursúa to Crown, 12 May 1696; see also Guatemala 151, pieza 3, Ursúa to Juan de Ortega Montañez, 12 May 1696.

84. Losaquunis (or Losagunis) may be a misreading of the hispanicized phrase, "Los Ah Kunes." *Kunab* is a Maya patronymic, while *kun* refers to a trance or spell (see Alfredo Barrera Vásquez et al., *Diccionario maya Cordemex: maya-español, español-maya* (Mérida: Ediciones Cordemex, 1980), pp. 352–53).

85. Götz Freiherr von Houwald, ed., *Nicolás de Valenzuela: conquista del Lacandón y conquista del Chol*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1979), pp. 33–34. The linguistic affiliation of the Muzules is conjectural; they may also have been Chol or Mopan-Yucatec speakers. The closest town to Zauí, located eight leagues to the south, was Ajopan, possibly a misreading of Ah Mopan. See Scholes and Thompson's discussion, which locates Zauí upstream on the Monkey River and the Muzul people across "a band of territory stretching from the middle Belize valley to the Sittee River" ("The Francisco Pérez *Probanza*," p. 67).

10: EPILOGUE

1. Juan de Villagutierre Soto-Mayor, *Historia de la conquista de la provincia de el Itzá, reducción y progresos de la de el Lacandón*. Biblioteca "Goathemala" de la Sociedad de Geografía e Historia, vol. 9 (Guatemala: Tipografía Nacional, 1933), Bk. 8, Ch. 9. I have translated this passage freely, and a somewhat different interpretation may be found in Robert D. Wood's English translation of the same passage (*History of the Conquest of the Province of the Itza*, Frank E. Comparato, ed. [Culver City: Labyrinthos, 1983], p. 297).

2. Villagutierre Soto-Mayor, *Historia de la conquista*, Bk. 8, Ch. 9.

3. See note 38, Chapter 5, on the significance of Nuestra Señora de los Remedios and San Pablo as patron saints of the conquered Tah Itza.

4. Ibid.

5. AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 339B, pieza 27, Governor Ursúa to Crown, 12 Sept. 1707 and 24 Jan. 1708.

6. In fact, the famine was the outcome of one of the worst epidemics of smallpox in Yucatan's history.

7. These troops, approximately one hundred in number, were under the command of Captain Joseph de Aguilar, who became the first permanent military commander of Nuestra Señora de los Remedios y San Pablo at Peten Itza. Aguilar later carried out a number of ambitious land-based military missions from Peten Itza. Las Cocinas was the Spanish term for St. George's Cay.

8. For Tipu's cooperation in the Itza conquest see Villagutierre, *Historia de la conquista*, Bk. 10, Ch. 7, 9. Mayas from both Chanchanha and Tipu participated in an attack upon the English at Zacatan, led by Captain Joseph de Aguilar in 1702 or 1703; see AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 339B, pieza 28, Relación del Bachiller Don Marcos de Vargas Dorantes, 10 July 1703.

9. Ursúa to Crown, 12 Sept. 1707.

10. The Spanish sources on seventeenth-century British piracy and logwood extraction in this area (as well as in the Laguna de Términos region) are not numerous, but they fully establish the existence of such activities. See, for example, AGI, México 159, ramo 6, no. 110, Real cédula to Viceroy of New Spain, 22 Jan. 1674; AGI, México 250, Merits and Services of Juan Gómez Moredo, 1679; AGI, Escribanía de Cámara 321A, Residencia del general Don Antonio de Layseca

Alvarado, por Don Juan Bruno Tello de Guzmán, 1683 (f. 133v–135r). See also discussion of British capture around Bacalar (then at Pacha) of Indians as slaves to be taken to Jamaica in AGI, México 1006, Governor Francisco Bazán to Crown, 9 Feb. 1660.

11. AGI, México 3017, Governor Antonio de Figueroa to Crown, 12 May 1729; Figueroa to Crown, 2 Aug. 1729 (two letters). Figueroa died on 10 August 1733, suffering from chills and fever, five leagues from Bacalar on his way back to Mérida on one of his trips to the new fortification; he was buried in Chunchuhub. See AGI, México 3017, Agustín de Echauri to Crown, 15 Aug. 1733, and Agustín García de Villalobos to Crown, 19 Aug. 1733. On Canary Islanders at Bacalar see AGI, México 3017, Governor Melchor de Navarrete to Crown, 18 Dec. 1757; AGI, México 3047, Inventario de cartas y expedientes, 1701–1800 (Governor to Crown, 1737). The best source for eighteenth-century Spanish-British conflict in Belize is José Antonio Calderón Quijano, *Belice, 1663(?)–1821: Historia de los establecimientos británicos del Río Valis hasta la independencia de Hispanoamérica* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos, 1944).

12. O. Nigel Bolland, "The Maya and the Colonization of Belize in the Nineteenth Century," in Grant D. Jones, ed., *Anthropology and History in Yucatán* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), pp. 70–73.

13. For details on Miskito Indian attacks in the Peten see AGI, Guatemala 299, Expediente sobre hostilidades y exterminio de los indios zambos, mosquitos, e ingleses en Roatan, 1713–1755 (see especially Real cédula, 30 April 1714 and Consulta, 5 June 1713). For Miskito activities in Belize see AGI, México 3017, Governor to Crown, 1 Aug. 1729, and AGI, México 1017, Papeles tocantes al exterminio de los ingleses del Río Walis, 1760.

14. Bolland, "The Maya and the Colonization of Belize," pp. 70–74.

15. Henderson, Capt. George, *An Account of the British Settlement of Honduras* (London: C. & R. Baldwin, 1809), quoted in *ibid.*, p. 72.

16. Diario y relación del viaje de Alejandro Joseph Güelles, 1726 (see Ch. 3, note 20).

17. The eighteenth-century documentation for Chanchanha is fairly extensive. A partial 1700 census of the town (also referred to in this document as the "nueva conversión de la Pimienta") may be found in AGI, México 1035, Memoria de los vecinos que con título de soldados que viven en este pueblo de Santa Clara de Chanchanha, sus familias, y oficios de que se sustentan, y de los criados que los sirven, 2 June 1700. The town was served by Franciscans at this time as it still was in 1747, when it was visited for the first time by a bishop of Yucatan (AGI 1030, Fray Francisco de San Buenaventura to Crown, 28 May and 12 Nov. 1748). Franciscans still controlled the mission at the time of a second visit in 1761, when the community, still under encomienda, consisted of 181 male tributaries (Certification no. 21, dated 4 May 1761, in AGI, México 2601, Veinte y una certificaciones que justifican el número de mantas y tributarios varones . . . , 1764).

For recent summaries of the role of Chichanha in the Caste War of Yucatan

see Nelson Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964), passim; Bolland, "The Maya and the Colonization of Belize," pp. 75–76; D. E. Dumond, "Independent Maya of the Late Nineteenth Century: Chiefdoms and Power Politics," in Grant D. Jones, ed., *Anthropology and History in Yucatán*, pp. 109–15; and Grant D. Jones, "Levels of Settlement Alliance among the San Pedro Maya of Western Belize and Eastern Petén, 1857–1936," in *Anthropology and History in Yucatán*, pp. 144–46.

Today the ruins of Chichanha, I understand, are part of a cattle ranch and may be in danger of destruction.

APPENDIX: LOCATIONS OF MAYA SETTLEMENTS

1. Confirmation of encomienda of Chanlacan and Yumpeten in Juan Sánchez de Aguilar, 1630 (see Ch. 3, note 59).

2. Chable is a Maya patronymic.

3. Relación de lo sucedido a Alonso Dávila, p. 101 (see Ch. 2, note 3).

4. Ibid., p. 103.

5. Ibid., p. 104.

6. Xoca (possibly Xoc Ha) is a Maya patronymic with various meanings having to do with storytelling, counting, reading, respect, etc.

7. Plano . . . de Salamanca de Vacalar, 1726.

8. Alternatively, there is also some possibility that Chable might have been the settlement of Ticabte (a possible misrendering of Tichable), which appears on the 1582 list of Bacalar towns. Nothing whatsoever is known about the location of Ticabte, however. See Memoria de los conventos, vicarías y pueblos, 1582.

9. Probanza of Melchor Pacheco, 1566.

10. Residencia de Bacalar, 1571, f. 1151r, 1164r, 1183v, 1202r.

11. Memoria de los conventos, vicarías y pueblos, 1582.

12. AGI, México 128, Ramo 3, No. 47, Encomiendas granted by the governors of Yucatan, 1583–1599.

13. Plano de Salamanca de Vacalar, 1726.

14. Ralph L. Roys, *The Political Geography of the Yucatan Maya*. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 613 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1957), p. 159.

15. See *ibid.* for a discussion of several map sources for Pacha. Pacha also appears on the 1879 Hübbe-Pérez map.

16. Diego López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, (Madrid: J. García Infanzón, 1688), Bk. 9, Ch. 5.

17. Plano de Salamanca de Vacalar, 1726.

18. Carta Topográfica 1:125,000, Felipe Carrillo Puerto E16-1 (México: Dirección General de Geografía del Territorio Nacional, Coordinación General de los Servicios Nacionales de Estadística, Geografía e Informática, 1982).

19. William T. Sanders, "Explorations on the East Coast of Yucatan," *Carnegie Institute of Washington Yearbook*, no. 54 (Washington, D.C., 1955), pp. 286–89; William T. Sanders, "Prehistoric Ceramics and Settlement Patterns in Quintana Roo, Mexico," *Contributions to American Anthropology and History*, no. 60 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1960). See also Alberto Escalona Ramos, "Algunas Ruinas Prehispánicas en Quintana Roo," *Boletín de la Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística* 61, no. 3 (1946): 513–33, 572–87; Rachel J. Hamilton and Rafael Cobos, "Archaeological and Malacological Reconnaissance of Chetumal Bay, 1987" TMs. [photocopy], map. 2, p. 4–5, Department of Anthropology, Tulane University, New Orleans.

20. Anthony P. Andrews (personal communication, 22 July 1988) has remarked that these sites, taken together, "constitute a major metropolis, much as did Tancah-Tulúm."

21. Hamilton and Cobos agree that Ichpaatun, La Iglesia, and the site of San Manuel (as well as, presumably, Oxtancah) are so close to one another that they might be considered a single extended site ("Archaeological and Malacological Reconnaissance," p. 10).

22. La Iglesia was first described by R. E. Merwin, "The Ruins of the Southern Part of the Peninsula of Yucatan, with Special References to their Place in the Maya Area" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1913), cited in Hamilton and Cobos, "Archaeological and Malacological Reconnaissance," p. 6. It was later re-examined by Alberto Escalona Ramos, who suggested that the church might have been part of Villa Real. See his "Algunas construcciones de tipo colonial en Quintana Roo," *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas*, vol. 3, no. 10, pp. 17–40 (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1943), and "Algunas ruinas prehispánicas en Quintana Roo," *Boletín de la Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística* 61, no. 3 (1946): pp. 533.

Escalona Ramos ("Algunas construcciones," pp. 18–21) published a plan and description of this large and substantially constructed *ramada* church. Francisco Bautista Pérez published photographs and a plan of the same church, which he, like Escalona Ramos, considered to be the ruins of the church constructed at Villa Real (*Chetumal*, tomo 1 [Chetumal: Fondo de Fomento Editorial del Gobierno del Estado de Quintana Roo, 1980], pp. 65–67, 70, 77).

23. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 6.

24. Luís Sánchez de Aguilar et al. to Governor, 20 Sept. 1638.

25. Alfredo Barrera Vásquez et al., *Diccionario maya Cordemex: maya-español, español-maya* (Mérida: Ediciones Cordemex, 1980), p. 768.

26. Gonzálo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, *Historia general y natural de las Indias*, vol. 3. Biblioteca de autores españoles desde la formación del lenguaje hasta nuestros días, vol. III (Madrid: Atlas, 1959), Bk. 32, Ch. 6.

27. Diane Z. Chase, "The Maya Postclassic at Santa Rita Corozal," *Archaeology* 34 (1981): 25–33.

28. Grant D. Jones, "Maya-Spanish Relations in Sixteenth Century Belize," *Belcast Journal of Belizean Affairs* 1, no. 1 (1984): 30–31.

29. Relación de lo sucedido a Alonso Dávila, p. 103.
30. Oviedo, *Historia General*, Bk. 31, Ch. 6.
31. "Map of the Archaeological Sites in the Maya Area" (New Orleans: Middle American Research Institute, Tulane University, 1940). Cited in Florencia Muller, *Atlas Areológico de la República Mexicana*, vol. 1, Quintana Roo (México: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1959).
32. Hamilton and Cobos, "Archaeological and Malacological Reconnaissance," pp. 4–5 (UTM coordinate 16QCR744695).
33. Probanza de Juan de Aguilar, 1566.
34. Méritos y servicios del capitán Francisco Pérez, 1661.
35. Encomiendas granted by the governors of Yucatan, 1583–1599.
36. Diario y relación del viaje de Alejandro Joseph Güelles, 1726; Plano de Salamanca de Vacalar, 1726.
37. France V. Scholes and J. Eric S. Thompson, "The Francisco Pérez *Probanza* and the *Matrícula* of Tipu," in Grant D. Jones, ed., *Anthropology and History in Yucatán* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977), pp. 44, 52.
38. Scholes and Thompson first proposed the location of the site, on the basis of an analysis of Fuensalida's *relación* in López de Cogolludo's *Historia de Yucatán*, in "The Francisco Pérez *Probanza*," p. 45. Further readings of this and other documents by the present author resulted in on-the-ground investigations by Jones and David M. Pendergast in 1978, leading to the first archaeological work at Negroman in 1980.
39. See Chapter 1, note 13.
40. The colonial period spelling of this town was almost always Lamanay, but David M. Pendergast has used Lamanai as a means of avoiding mispronunciation by English speakers (personal communication). See Chapter 1, note 13, for sources on Lamanai.
41. AGI, Contaduría 915A.
42. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 11, Ch. 13.
43. *Ibid.*, Bk. 9, Ch. 6.
44. Memoria de los conventos, vicarías y pueblos, 1582.
45. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 11, Ch. 13.
46. Title of the encomienda of towns in the Bacalar province, 1622.
47. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 11, Ch. 13.
48. Juan Sánchez de Aguilar suplica se le de confirmación de los pueblos de Chanlacan y Yumpeten, 1630. The 1615 reduction is noted in the governor's assignment of the encomienda, dated 8 Nov. 1625.
49. Title of the *encomienda* of towns in the Bacalar province, 1622.
50. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 9, Ch. 6.
51. Scholes and Thompson, "The Francisco Pérez *Probanza*," p. 45.
52. López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 11, Ch. 13.
53. Scholes and Thompson, "The Francisco Pérez *Probanza*," p. 50.
54. *Ibid.*, 46.
55. *Ibid.*, 45.

56. Petición del alférez Cristóbal Sánchez, 1631; Luís Sánchez de Aguilar to Governor, 29 Oct. 1638.

57. Ibid.

58. Petición del alférez Cristóbal Sánchez, 1631.

59. AGI, México 250, Petition for confirmation of encomienda of Loche and half of Dzonotchil by Captain Juan Gómez Moredo, 1689.

60. "Plano de los establecimientos británicos de corta de palo de tinte en Belize, según lo establecido en el artículo 6.º del Tratado de Versalles de 1783," in Calderón Quijano, *Cartografía*, fig. 10; original in AHN, León Tello, no. 240, p. 67.

61. Luís Sánchez de Aguilar et al., to Governor, 20 Sept. 1638. Fray Martín Tejero found the inhabitants of Manan back in their village in 1641 but moved them due to flooding to an island called Zula, during which period he was captured by Dutch pirates (López de Cogolludo, *Historia de Yucatán*, Bk. 11, Ch. 13).

62. Carta Topográfica 1:125,000, Chetumal E16-4-7 (México: Dirección General de Geografía del Territorio Nacional, Coordinación General de los Servicios Nacionales de Estadística, Geografía e Informática, 1982).

63. Joaquin Hübbe and Andrés Aznar Pérez, "Karte der Halbinsel Yucatán . . . ," in *Geographische Mittheilungen*, tafel II (Gotha: Justus Perthes, 1879).

GLOSSARY

*Mayan term.

Adelantado: Title given to founders and governors of new Spanish colonies.

**Ah kin (ah k'in)*: Maya priest.

Alcabala: Excise or sales tax.

Alcalde: Principal magistrate and administrator of a *cabildo* (also *alcalde ordinario*).

Alguacil: Constable; ex-officio *cabildo* member.

Almojarifazgo: Import-export duty.

Apellido: Surname.

Arroba: Weight measure of about twenty-five pounds.

Bachiller: Individual who has passed first-level university examination.

Barrio: Neighborhood, usually Indian, of a *villa* or city.

**Batab*: Principal native political authority of a town.

**Bobat*: Prophet.

Cabecera: Principal town of an *encomienda* or parish.

Cabildo: Town or village council.

Cabo: Chief militia officer.

Cacao: Cocoa tree or bean.

Cacicazgo: Political territory governed by a *cacique*.

Cacique: Principal leader of an Indian community.

Capilla: Chapel.

Capitán: Militia captain.

Carga: Measure of grain (usually *cacao* or maize), about six bushels.

Casado: Married man; used as unit of tribute payment.

Casta: Racial-ethnic category denoting persons of mixed European, Indian, and/or African descent.

**Chilan (chila'n)*: Prophet.

Comisario de la real hacienda: Commissary of the royal treasury; ex-officio *cabildo* member.

Congregación: See *reducción*.

Cue: Non-Christian, native temple.

Defensor de naturales: Official appointed as legal representative of Indian population.

Derrama: Unofficial or illegal tax levy.

Diezmo: Ten percent ecclesiastical tithe.

Encomendero: Holder of *encomienda*.

Encomienda: Royal grant to Spaniard for right of tribute from specified native population, usually one or more towns.

Entrada: Journey, often military in nature, for the purpose of discovery, conquest, or reconquest.

Escribano público: Official scribe (secretary or clerk) serving a *cabildo*.

Estancia: Cattle ranch.

Expediente: Set of related documents.

Falca: Boat made of two canoes lashed together.

Forastero: Nonresident; applied to Indians not residing in their assigned towns.

Guardian: Member of regular clergy in charge of a mission town.

**Halach uinic (halach winik)*: Principal political authority in a Maya province.

Hidalgo: Member of native nobility.

Huido: Runaway.

Indio de servicio: Native who performs forced labor (*servicio personal*), often on a rotating basis.

Juez: Administrator of a *repartimiento*.

Justicia: Designation sometimes applied to *cabildo* membership.

Justicia mayor: Governor's deputy who presided over local *cabildos*.

**Katun (k'atun)*: 7,200-day period (twenty 360-day years) in the Maya calendar.

Legajo: Bundle or volume of archival documents.

Libro de cabildo: *Cabildo* record book.

Macehual: Native commoner.

Maestre de campo: Chief militia officer.

Maestro: Native lay church officer assigned responsibility for religious instruction, certain sacramental duties, and ritual performance (also called *maestro cantor* and *maestro de capilla*).

Manta: Length of cotton cloth paid as native tribute.

Matrícula: Village or town census.

Mayordomo: Custodian of civic property; ex-officio *cabildo* member.

Merced: Grant or appointment, usually in recognition of service.

Mestizo: Person of mixed European and Indian ancestry.

Milpa: Swidden subsistence plot, primarily producing maize.

Montaña: Forest or sparsely inhabited region.

Mulato: Person of mixed European and African ancestry (mulatto).

Naboría: Indian neighborhood or *barrio*, usually inhabited by *indios de servicio*.

Novena: Nine-day period devoted to religious recognition of a saint (also *novenario*).

Partido: Administrative jurisdiction.

Piragua: Long dugout canoe or flat-bottomed boat.

Pozol: See *saka'*.

Presidio: Military fortified town.

Principal: Member of the native elite.

Probanza: Record of individual merits and services.

Procurador: Ex-officio *cabildo* member who served as attorney-accountant.

Provincial: Governing superior of a religious order.

Ramada: Style of colonial church construction with pole and palm-thatch nave.

Reducción: Forced resettlement of native population in compact communities.

Reducto: Fortification or redoubt.

Regidor: Councilor, member of a *cabildo*.

Relación: Descriptive account.

Repartimiento: In Yucatan, forced advances of cash or goods in return for native-produced foodstuffs, crafts, or natural products.

Residencia: Judicial process applied to former colonial officials.

Retasación: Readjustment of tribute obligations by means of population recount.

* *Saka'*: Beverage traditionally made of maize, *cacao*, and water.

Sujeto: Outlying population administered from a *cabecera*.

Teniente de gobernador: Lieutenant governor.

Tostón: Monetary unit equaling one-half peso.

Vara: Measure of length, about thirty-three inches.

Vecino: Usually a Spanish inhabitant of a town.

Viga: Roof beam.

Vigía: Lookout station.

Villa: Town that serves as a local seat of colonial government, subordinate to the provincial capital.

Visita: Subordinate town of a parish; also, a tour of towns by a civil or church official, sometimes for the purpose of imposing fines or collecting contributions.

Zontle: One-sixtieth of a *carga* of *cacao*.

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